

GAZETTEER

OF

BĪKĀNĪR STATE.

Ministry of Education

Government of India,
New Delhi

BY

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76505
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF GOVERNMENT PRINTING, CALCUTTA.

1874.

30954356
Pow. G.
REPRINTED AT THE
GOVERNMENT PRESS, BIKANER.

10-88

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PART.

HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the Musulmans invaded India, they found existing there great Rájput kingdoms, of which that of the Ráthors, whose capital was Kanauj, was one. Colonel Tod dwells upon the splendour of this monarchy, and describes how, weakened by its contest with the Chohans of Delhi, it fell a prey to the invaders, and how, "in Sambat 1268 (A. D. 1212), eighteen years subsequent to the overthrow of Kanauj, Seoji and Sait Ram, grandsons of its last monarch, abandoned the land of their birth, and with two hundred retainers, the wreck of their vassalage, journeyed westward to the desert with the intent, according to some of the chronicles, of making a pilgrimage to the shrine of Dwárká, but, according to others and with more probability, to carve their fortunes in fresh fields unscathed by the luxuries in which they had been tried, and proud in their poverty and sole heritage, the glory of Kanauj."

Colonel Tod goes on to tell how Seoji established a state in the wilds of Márwár; but I need not here take further notice of him or of his successors up to the reign of Jodhá who founded Jodhpur, the present capital of Márwár, in Sambat 1515 (A. D. 1459).

Jodhá had fourteen sons, his immediate predecessors had had a numerous offspring, estates worth having had become scarce, and the enterprising amongst them looked round for new lands to occupy. It was thus that Bíká, the sixth son of Jodhá, and Bídá, the twelfth, like the Danites of old (Judges XVIII), "sought themselves an inheritance to dwell in" in the country to the north.

The story of the Ráthor settlement in Bikanér, and the subsequent history of that state, is very briefly told in Tod's work.

and when a political officer was in 1868 stationed in Bíkánír, an effort was made to obtain fuller details regarding this important section of the great tribe, the head of which was, after the Amer (Jaipur) Chief, and his son, the Hindú of highest rank at the Court of Akbar.

A "Kiyánt," or history of Bíkánír, had been recently compiled by Diyáljī, one of the principal Chárans, or bards of the state, but it was many months before a copy of it could be procured. It proved to be a manuscript of formidable bulk, and comprised the history of the Ráthor tribe from its origin, but as the copying had to be completed quickly, only that part was transcribed which related to Bíkánír, and which began with the career of Bíká.

The language of the work was the dialect of Bíkánír, including some Urdú words, and though written in prose, it was garnished with long extracts from old poems in verification of the facts narrated, with which they are usually contemporaneous or nearly so. Single couplets (doha), too, are often quoted in attestation of a date or an event. Diyáljī's work is generally too long, tautological and involved, to be translated at length; but anecdotes are often well told, and terse colloquialisms often met with. The extracts in verse I have read very little of, because I found many of the words in them could only be interpreted by a Bíkáníri, and I had only a Shekháwátí tutor, but the whole of the prose which forms the bulk of the work I have read and translated. Shorter works fell into my hands regarding Bíká and the Chárání woman, Karnijí, an incarnation of Mahadeví, who is believed even by the most travelled and intelligent men of the present day in Bíkánír to have bestowed the territory on her protégé Bíká.

The reign of Rájá Anúp Singh, perhaps the golden time of Bíkánír valour and fame, was the subject of another little book, which fell into my hands, and no doubt many such might be obtained. I have, however, in the following pages given in an abbreviated form the version of Diyáljī, the official bard, only adding a few comments where they seemed necessary.

The limits within which these poems—for, as I have stated above, the Kiyánt is based on old poems—can be looked upon as affording data for history, are explained by Colonel Tod. They touch on little besides war, marriage, and religious observances, and where the military character of favourite warriors are concerned, they are full of extravagances: suppressions are frequent, and liberality to Chárans is no doubt exaggerated for the sake of

people, they re-act on the latter, and are a better guide to their feelings and interests than more matter-of-fact histories would be. The story of Bikánir, as told by Diyálji, is believed by Bikániris, and it may be more advantageous to those who have social intercourse with Rájputs, and more practically useful to them in giving an insight into Rájput character to have some acquaintance with the history of the land as believed in by the people themselves, tedious though it may be, than to possess a critical knowledge of it derived from many collated manuscripts. I have greatly abbreviated the narrative as given in the Kiyánt, but the fear of tediousness has not deterred me from inserting anything which, I thought, might be useful in any way. I believe vernacular prose histories of states, intended to be complete and based to a great extent on old records and poems, as well as on tradition, are rare. Indeed, I have known a Cháran poet distinctly decline to write prose as being *infra dig*.

Bikánir has a reputation in Rájputáná for its collection of books, and from the time of Biká there has been a succession of local poets whose works have been to a great extent preserved.

In Sambat 1753 (A. D. 1696) one Jasrúp Mundra of Bikánir made a collection of them, and his compilation, a ponderous volume, is in the Bikánir palace library. In the time of Ajit Singh of Jodhpur, one Nainsukh Munot of that state composed a Kiyánt or history of the Ráthors, which is also in the Bikánir palace: I have, since the Gazetteer was printed, ascertained that these two books furnished the basis of Diyálji's Kiyánt. He quotes nearly fifty poems up to the death of Anúp Singh, of which the authors of more than thirty are specified, and are for the most part known persons:—

POEMS QUOTED IN DIYÁLJI'S "KIYANT."

	AUTHOR.
<i>Biká's time.</i>	
Death of Kándhal, (see page 8 of Gazetteer)	... Not known.
Release from Ajmír of Bar Singh, (page 9)	... Chándan Kiriya (Cháran caste).
<i>Lúnkaran.</i>	
Lúnkaran's marriage at Chitor, (page 10)	... Sanwal of Deshnúk, grandson of Karníji (Cháran).
Defeat of Jaisalmír Ráwal, (page 11)	... Lálá (Cháran).
The verse on Karní, (page 11) ...	... Asa (this verse is well known throughout Rájputáná) - (Cháran).
<i>Jetsí.</i>	
Shekho and Gangajis's campaign, (page 13)	... Chánga Mahru, son of Lálá.
Karníji's end, (page 14) ...	... Not known.
War with Kámrán, (page 14) ...	... Ditto.
Death of Jetsí and loss of Bikánir, (page 15)	... Sújá, son of Nágráj (Cháran).
<i>Kallian Singh.</i>	
Recovery of Bikánir, (page 18)	... Hamír, son of Sújá.
Verses of encouragement to Malde of Jodhpur, (page 19) ...	... Jínta (Cháran).

POEMS QUOTED IN DIYALJI'S "KIYANT."	AUTHOR.
<i>Rai Singh.</i>	
Services at Attock, (page 22) ...	Not known.
Gujarat War, 1st poem, (page 22) ...	Ditto.
Ditto, 2nd poem, (page 22) ...	Ditto.
Surtan of Sarohi, (page 23) ...	Dúda Asiya, (Cháran).
Sarohi Campaign, (page 23) ...	Unknown.
Gifts to Chárans, (page 24) ...	Sanka Bharait (Cháran), who received Nágor in grant.
Rám Singh's campaign against Chandar Sen, (page 22) ...	Unknown.
Rai Singh at Jodhpur, (page 25) ...	Málo Sándho (Cháran).
Ditto ditto, (page 25) ...	Ratano Deoráj, (Cháran).
The magnificent gift to Dúda Cháran, (page 24) ...	Dursa Adaka (Cháran).
Death of Amar Singh, (page 26) ...	Padma Cháran.
Pirthwi Ráj and the Nauroza, (page 26) ...	Ráj báí, a Cháran's daughter.
<i>Dalpat Singh.</i>	
Háthi Singh Champawat's attempt to rescue Dalpat Singh, (page 29) ...	Unknown.
<i>Karan Singh.</i>	
Púgal, (page 32) ...	Mahesh Dás Cháran.
Kesri Singh, and the battle with Sháh Sújah (page 32) ...	Lúnkaran.
The Rájás on the banks of the Attock, (page 32) ...	Thakursí Sindaich.
Song to Karníjí, (page 34) ...	Rájá Karan Singh's own.
Anúp Singh's government of Bikaner during life-time of his father, who was absent in the Dakhan, (page 35) ...	Unknown.
Karan Singh at Aurangabad in Dakhan, (page 34) ...	Ditto.
<i>Anúp Singh.</i>	
Anúp Singh's contest with a Dakhani, (page 35) ...	Aidan Gádan.
Anúp Singh at the siege of Golconda, Bijápur, &c., and the capture of Thanna Sáh, (page 35) ...	Unknown.
Anúp Singh makes Bikánír a place of refuge to Hindúism, (page 37) ...	Bhopat Asiya.
Expedition against Bhátis and Johiyas, (page 37) ...	Pekniya, (Dádhi).
Padam Singh's gift to Cháran at Udepur, (page 39) ...	Hari Dás son of Bana, Sindaich.
Anúp Singh at Aduni, (page 35) ...	Shankar Bhárait (Cháran).
Padam Singh and the Kotwal of Aurangabad, (page 38) ...	Bijo Sándhu.
Ditto ditto	Dwárká Dás, Dadwariya.
Ditto ditto	Unknown.
Padam Singh's delicate generosity to the Cháran, (page 39) ...	Unknown.
Last battle and death of Padam Singh (page 40) ...	Kombho Sándhú.
Ditto ditto	Unknown.
Ditto ditto	Ditto,
Ditto ditto	Gordhan Gádan.
Ditto ditto	Ditto.
Ditto ditto	Dwárká Dás.

It is not worth while mentioning the bards subsequent to Anúp Singh.

The palace library in Bikánír contains some thousands of works, Sanscrit and other. Besides those mentioned there are several that would be valuable in compiling a full history of

Rájputáná, such as the whole of Chand's long poem called the Pirthiráj rása; an original work on Ráo Jodhá, founder of Jodhpur, by Pasaich Gádan, who seems to have been the father of modern Ráthor poetry; an original work on Ráo Jetsí, by Sújá; a contemporary history of Rájá Anúp Singh, called the Anúp Singhí, ka rúpak, by Hingol Dás Sándhú; and a similar work on Rájá Súján Singh, by one Jogi Dás Mahta. But it is probable that quite as valuable poems would be obtained from Chárans resident in out-of-the-way villages which they received in grant for writing them (see page 123).



BÍKA.

Bíká was the sixth and Bídá the twelfth son of Jodhá, Ráo of Márwár and founder of Jodhpur. They were both sons of the same mother, Naurangde, of the Sankhlá clan. Bíká, the elder, was born Sáwan, Sambat 1495 (A.D. 1439), and nothing is related of him until he entered on the enterprise which was to give permanence to his name and family, and which is said to have originated in a remark casually made in darbár by Ráo Jodhá.

Bíká on the occasion in question had come late and taken his seat beside his uncle Kándhal, with whom he carried on a conversation in a whisper. The Ráo jestingly remarked that they must be scheming a conquest of new territory, an idea which was no doubt constantly suggested to him by the necessity of providing for his large family. Kándhal at once treated the observation as a challenge, and standing up announced that now he felt pledged to win new lands. It so happened that one Nápo, a Sankhlá Rájput, on his way to Jánglú in the present Bikanír territory, was then present. He pointed out that the country to the north where he lived had been abandoned by the Sankhlás, weakened by losses in war (*vide* Tod, Vol. I, page 630), and suggested its occupation by the Ráthors. Ráo Jodhá approved of the suggestion, urged Bíká to act on it, and desired Kándhal to support his nephew. The enterprise seemed a promising one, and others asked and received permission to join it: and Bíká, Asoj Sud

set out on the enterprise, accompanied by others who founded families in Bikanír and became hereditary servants. Bíká and his uncle, Kándhal, 10, Sambat 1522 (A.D. 1465), left Jodhpur with a considerable following, consisting of 100 horse and 500 foot, together with his uncles Kándhal, Rúpo, Mándan, Mandalo, and Náthú, his brothers Jogáyat and Bídá, Nápo,* the Sankhlá, Parihár Bela, the master of the horse (Sáhni), and the following writers (mútasaddís) Lála Lakhansi, the Bed, Chauth Mal, the Kotári, Bár Singh, the Bacháwat, Parohit Bikrámsí, and Sáhúkár Saloji, the Ráthí.

Bíká was thus provided with a civil and military staff sufficient for the control and government of a tract of country. It will not be out of place to mention here that a prestige, and in some cases indestructible rights, attach in the present day to the descendants of Bíká's officials. I do not allude to the Ráthors only; for, although the Kandhalots, Bídáwats, &c., will be prominently brought to notice in the following pages, the children of the Bráhman, the Parihár, and the Baniás, have been scarcely less conspicuous in Bikanír story.

In the unattractive region Bíká was about to occupy, it appears that the country where the city of Bikanír is now situated was abandoned, and could

* Nápo's family was extinguished, as will be hereafter told; and the Bacháwats, too, perished in the time of Raja Sur Singh. But the children of Bela, some 250 in number, still hold the first place among the Bikanír horse, and enjoy regular pay when other less favored servants are starving. Eighty mercantile and ten official families claim Lála, the Bed, as their ancestor; four or five houses (one highly respectable) spring from Chouth Mal, the Kotari; 200 are descended from the Parohit; while Saloji, the Ráthí, whose tribe have the title of Mahta, is the common ancestor of 150 houses, of which some twenty are considered official.

be taken possession of by the Ráthors without dispute. This, however, was but a small tract. To its north and west the Bhátis ruled, and to the east, north-east, and south-east, were the settlements of independent Játs; beyond the Játs round Bhatner were Bhátis, Cháyals and Johyás, chiefly, if not entirely, Muhammadans. Hissár was occupied by the Delhi Emperor's Subadár. The Káim Khánis held what is now Shekháwati. The Bidáwat country was in the possession of the Mohil Rájputs, and the tract in the east where Reni is situated was occupied by Cháyal and Khinehi Rájputs. The present Bikanír territory was, according to Cunningham, originally called Bágardesh, from one Bágri Ráo, who probably founded Bágor, which, according to Tod, Bika took from the Bhátis.

Bika the first day of his march reached Mándaur, and going to the shrine of Goreji devoted himself to his work. On rising the following morning he found Bhairúji's* amulet (múrat) amongst his amulets, although it

Bika is favoured by the gods. Meets the Cháraní Karníji. Nápo, the Sankhlá, remarked, "Goreji† goes with you, your 'ráj' will indeed be strong." Thus encouraged, Bika set off, and on reaching Deshnúk, 16 miles south of the present city of Bikanír, he paid his respects to a famous Cháran woman named Karníji, who was known to be gifted with supernatural power. She said to him, "Your destiny is higher than your fathers, and many servants will touch your feet." In obedience to the direction of Karníji, Bika first settled at Chándásar, where he abode three years; he then came and dwelt six years at Deshnúk, where he frequently waited on Karníji. After that he lived for three years at Ko-

Bika lives successively at Chándásar, Deshnúk, Koram-desar, Jánglu. randesar, near Gajné, where, perceiving it was a suitable place, he set up the image of Goreji on a tank embankment; the temple is a place of some note at the present day, and there are traces of Bika's small fort. He afterwards dwelt ten years at Jánglu, which he converted from a depopulated into a flourishing district. His 100 horse had now grown into 400, composed of

Bika marries the daughter of the Púgal chief. Rájputs of various tribes. It was whilst he dwelt at Jánglú that Karníji signified her wish that he should marry into a family of local consequence. That of Shekho, the Bháti Ráo of Púgal in the desert to the north, was fixed upon; for Shekho had been styled "brother" and blessed by Karníji, whom he came to pay his respects to on the fourteenth of each fortnight. On her signifying her desire to Shekho, he refused, and was even unmoved by her prophecy that thousands good as he should touch the feet of Bika. Now Shekho was a great robber. One day he was returning with booty from the neighbourhood of Multán, when he was overtaken by 400 of the Multán garrison, who put his followers to flight and carried him captive to the Subadár of Multán, who confined him in a matchlock-defended fort. Shekho's lady went to beg Karníji to help her "brother," promising that his daughter Rang Kaur should marry Bika if the prayer were granted. Karníji, however, insisted that arrangements for the marriage should be made at once, though she promised that Shekho should be back in time for it. Accordingly Goglí, Shekho's manager, was employed, and everything was prepared.

Bika on the appointed day repaired to Púgal with his marriage party, and there, too, Karníji presented herself. The marriage proceeded, and when they came to the circuit ceremony, and the presence of the bride's father was necessary, Karníji flew off to Multán, brought Shekho and caused him to

* Mahádeo in his dark form.

† Mahádeo in his light form.

complete the marriage. It was thus that the first important marriage of a Bikanir chief took place. Gogli, the manager, incurred the displeasure of his master for the part he had taken in the business, and was expelled from Pugal. He went to Karniji for succour, and she caused Bika to give him a village. This is the first recorded grant of land made in the Bikanir State. The truth apparently is, that Bika, anxious to ally himself with the most powerful family of the region, took advantage of the imprisonment of the Bhatis Chief to entrap or intimidate the wife into giving him her daughter in marriage.

Bika now resolved to build a fort at Korandesar, which was in the Bhati country. Shekho objected, but did not actively oppose, and the fort was finished. The Bhatis then awoke to their danger and went to Shekho, saying,

"He has built a fort over our heads, our lands will go next." But Shekho declined to fight his son-in-law, and referred them elsewhere for a leader. The Bhatis then applied to Kolkaran Kehrot, who took the field against Bika with 2,000 men, although eighty years of age. He sent to Shekho to join him that they might "nip the evil in the bud." Shekho replied that he had a headache. Kolkaran retorted that the Rathors would give him a very bad

Fights and defeats the Bhatis. headache before they had done with him. Bika on his part, alarmed by the coalition, took counsel with his uncle, brother, and Napo, the Sankhlia. The latter, who was a great observer of omens, re-assured him, saying that signs portended the duration for many generations of his raj, and that he might confidently meet the Bhatis. Accordingly they met Kolkaran in battle. Three hundred Bhatis fell, and Kolkaran, who in spite of his age was "full of vigour," was amongst the slain. Notwithstanding the victory, the Bhatis remained so hostile that Bika thought it wise to build a fort elsewhere, and he sent Napo and others to search for a site.

The explorers journeyed until they came to Rati Ghati, a rocky and raving spot on the track between Nagar and Multan. There, in a "Khair" thicket, they beheld a sheep with two lambs, which several wolves were after. But the sheep fearlessly faced them whenever they approached to seize her young, and by her bold front kept them at a distance.

Napo drove away the wolves and at once pronounced the spot auspicious. Word was sent to Bika, who came and laid the foundations of a fort. This, however, was not the present fort of Bikanir; but the future site of the latter was also indicated about the same time as follows. Napo and one Naro had again gone to observe omens. As they rose early in the morning, they noticed a man asleep close by with his head resting upon a tuft of "bharut" grass which served him as a pillow. Round the tuft was coiled a poisonous snake, which the man who had lain down in the darkness had not noticed. Napo directed that the reptile should not be molested, but carefully watched. When it moved away they followed it, and it led them to the ground already pointed out by the incident of the wolves and sheep. Napo then foretold the erection of the present and larger fort on

the spot where the snake had first been seen. The City of Bikanir founded, Sambat 1515. fort of Bika was founded in Sambat 1542; and in 1545 the building of the city was begun, to which fact an old couplet testifies, which may be thus rendered—

*"Baisakh, the month, the day the second, fifteen four five the year.
And the sixth day of the week when Bika founded Bikanir."*

Dealings with Ját clan.

Biká was now brought into contact with the Játs, of whom there were the following clans :—

List of Ját Clans.

No.	Names of Clans.	No. of their villages.	Principal villages.	Names of their Chiefs.
1	Godárás ...	360	Ladhri & Shekhsar ...	Pándú.
2	Sárans ...	360	Bhándang ...	Púlo.
3	Kaswas ...	360	Sídmúkh ...	Kaur Pal.
4	Beniwáls ...	...	Ráisalána ...	Ráisal.
5	Puniahs ...	360	Bara Lundi ...	Kaná.
6	Sihagas ...	140	Súin ...	Chokho.
7	Sodúans ...	84	Dhansi ...	Amrá.

The Godárás voluntarily acknowledged the sovereignty of Biká, and the heads of their clan still place the tíká on the forehead of every new occupant of the "gadí" on a new occupant of the Bikánír "Gadí." of Biká. The circumstances which led to this voluntary submission is not noticed by the author of the "Kiyánt," which is my chief source of information. But, although he ignores the fact that the Godárás are not Bikánír subjects by right of conquest, it is admitted in Bikánír, and the reasons of their acceptance of Biká as their sovereign lord are mentioned by Tod. Their object was protection from Johyás and Bhátis* and immunity from the plundering incursions of the Ráthors. An incident which showed the Godárás the advantage of possessing so powerful a protector, also illustrates the social life of the simple Játs of the desert at this period, and I will relate it as much as possible in the words of the Kiyánt.

Pándú, the Chief or Chaudhri of the Godárás, had a great reputation for liberality. One day a "Dádhi"† of the Godárás came begging to Púlo, the Chaudhri of the Sárans. Púlo gave her what he could afford, and afterwards drank wine and went to sleep in his house. Meanwhile his wife Malíki, a daughter of Ráisal, head of the Beniwáls, heard of the circumstance, and apparently thinking that the Dádhi had not been treated bountifully enough, went and begged her husband to exhibit such bounty to the beggar that it should eclipse that of Pándú and excite the wonder of the Godárás, amongst whom was the "Dádhi's home." Púlo, angry at being disturbed, and full of liquor, exclaimed, "Widow, be off to Pándú if you like," and he struck his wife several times. She, enraged at the outrage, exclaimed that henceforth his bed should be to her as her brother's, and she took an oath not to speak to her husband again. She then shut herself up in the house and obstinately held to her vow. This continued for six months, and the quarrel between the Chaudhri and Chaudhrián became known throughout the clan. After that period the brotherhood assembled, in order to effect a reconciliation between their chief and his lady. They first killed goats, sent for liquor, stretched the festive (pántia) cloth and enjoyed a feast. They then sent a messenger to

* For information regarding Bhátis and Johyás, see "Bhatner."

† A caste of mendicants and singers more localised than "Natts." A portion of the village expenses in the country west of the Jumna is still incurred in remunerating them for their entertainments.

fetch the Chaudhran, in order that the domestic quarrel might be publicly adjusted. But her door was closed, and she answered not the summons, so that the messenger returned without her. Whereupon the Jāts directed him to force the door, to take her by the hand and bring her. The door was accordingly forced, but the messenger found the lady fled, and only a sleeping slave-girl was in the room. When questioned, the slave-girl said, "Do not blame me, Pāndū, the Godārā, has taken her away." The fact was, that a month after the quarrel Malīkī had sent word to Pāndū that on his account she had been beaten, and if he would have her, she would come to him. Pāndū, who was an old man of seventy, called his son Nakodar, and saying that as he himself was too old for such adventures, Nakodar must go and fetch the lady who had appealed to him. So Nakodar set off with 150 camels, and lay in concealment half a kos from Bhadrang, the Sāran's chief village. A scout was sent at night to Malīkī, who, leaving her slave-girl to make known where she was gone, joined Nakodar's party. Nakodar received her with respect, addressed her as "sweet mother," and requested her to take the front seat on his camel, and she was thus conveyed to the Godārā village, Shekhsar.

Pāndū, notwithstanding his age, took Malīkī into his family, but she and Nakodar's mother could not agree together, so she eventually left him and dug a well and established near Goplan, a village which was called Malkisar.

The assembled Sārāns, when they discovered that the Chaudhran had fled, followed her track, but finding that she had really gone to Pāndū they returned, as Pāndū was under the protection of Bīkā and beyond their vengeance.

Pūlo then sent word to the chief Jāts of the disgrace he had sustained, but they all agreed that without foreign aid they could not punish the Godārās, supported as they were by Bīkā. They therefore promised a sum of money to Narsingh, the Jātū Rājput of Siwāni, on the present Hissār and Bīkānīr border, if he would give them help. Pūlo was joined by all the principal Jāts, Rāisāl the Beniwal, his fugitive wife's father; Kanwar Pāl the Kaswa, her maternal grandfather, Amrā and Chokhā, the chiefs of the Sodwāns and Sīhāgās, respectively, and the head of the Puniāhs. Watching their opportunity, Narsingh attacked and burnt the Godārā village of Ladhriā, where Pāndū and his son were. But they escaped, and flying to Bīkā and Kāndhal, who were then about to plunder Sīdmūkh, cried, "Narsingh Jātū kills your Jāts and goes off untouched." The Rāthors then pursued Narsingh till midnight, when they halted to rest beside a village tank. It so happened that Narsingh was asleep in this village, the owners of which were relations of Pūlo and at enmity with him.

They came to Bīkā and offered to betray the Jātū to him, while he on his part promised to expel Pūlo and place another Chaudhri in his place. Narsingh, however, was not to be murdered in his sleep. Kāndhal roused him, shouting, "Awake Narsingh; Bīkā, the son of Jodhā, has come!" Then Narsingh arose

and taking sword and shield he mounted his steed, and, both parties prepared for the fight. At the first onset

Narsingh cut through Bīkā's armour and slightly wounded him in the shoulder. Bīkā thereupon exclaimed, "Narsingh, you should strike thus," and cut him in two. The Jātūs and Jāts then fled. Although the Jāts did not submit immediately, they were not long in discovering that it was the only course open to them, for Bīkā's horse under

Kāndhal, now increased to 900 talwārs, gave them no peace; so at last all their leaders came and touched Bīkā's feet. The lands of the Khinchi Rājput, who held 140 villages situated

The Jāts submit.

about the centre of Bikánir present territory, likewise fell under the new power, together with some territories wrested from

Likewise the Khinchi Belochs and Káim Kháns in the direction of Sindh

Further extension of territory. and Shekháwáti respectively, and Karnáwáti was

Conquest of the Mohil country. taken from the Patháns and others of Hissár. The Mohil country had been subjected by Bidá, Bíká's own younger brother, and the history of the conquest deserves some notice.

The Mohil country lay along part of the present Jaipur boundary, included Ládno to the south of Sújángarh, and is said to have consisted of 1,400 villages. Of these, the principal were Dronpur and Chápar, which at one time gave their names to the tract. Chápar is situated on a salt lake, a few miles north of Sújángarh, and Dronpur was under a hill, the "Kálá Dungar," within ten

Legendary history of the miles and to the west of Sújángarh. Legends tell Mohil country, the present that to this hill, Droná, the famous Bráhma tutor of Bidáwáti.

the Pándús, retired, built a city and ruled the adjacent territory. Subsequently, the district came into the possession of the Dáhúliya Panwar Rájput, who, it is said, ruled it for 1,500 years. They were expelled by the Bágri Rájput from Nágor, who remained 1,900 years. The Mohils under Ráná Sújan followed, and they, according to tradition, held sway for 619 years. Mohil, it is stated, was seventh in descent from the fire-born Chohán, but it does not appear how many generations lie between Mohil

Attack on the Mohils by Ráo Jodhá. and the conqueror of Chápar Dronpur. So far is mythological. Probable history now begins. In the time of Jodhá, chief of Márwár, the head of the

Mohils was Ajit, and to him Jodhá married one of his daughters. In spite of his alliance, however, Jodhá coveted the Mohil lands for one of his sons, and taking advantage of a visit of Ajit to Jodhpur, he resolved to slay him, although he was his guest and son-in-law. Ajit's mother-in-law, however, became aware of the plot and sent word to Ajit's "pásbán" (mistress) to warn Ajit that he must not stay a single "ghari" longer (half an hour). The "pásbán" informed Ajit's minister (pardhán), who reflected that Ajit was not the man to fly from danger; so that to induce him to leave Jodhpur at once, stratagem must be resorted to. Accordingly, Ajit was informed that news had just arrived of an attack on Chápar by Játs, and that succour was urgently needed to save the town. Then Ajit sounded his "nagára" (kettle-drum), and without further notice rode off. At village Ganero, not very far from Chápar, Ajit perceived that a force was following him, and on enquiry the whole story of the plot and counterplot was told; and he learnt that Jodhá, guessing that his treachery had been exposed, had followed him, to attempt by force what he had failed to effect by fraud. Ajit, displeased at being tricked into retreat, angrily pulled his mustache and prepared for the fight, which followed, and which was fierce. Losses on each side were heavy; but, Ajit being slain, the victory remained with Jodhá, who not strong enough to follow up his success returned to Jodhpur, and his daughter became "sati" on the funeral pile of her slain husband. (For another cause of the feud between the Ráthors and Mohils, *vide* Tod, vol. I, page 632.)

The Mohils were weakened by internal divisions, and Jodhá soon gained Jodhá takes the Mohil towns. another success over them, slaying their leader

Ráná Bachráj, and then taking possession of Chápar. But Bachráj's son, Meghú, who is described as a "great Rájput, excelling in power of command, generosity, and prowess," gave Jodhá no rest, and finally compelled him to abandon the country. Meghú retained his power

until his death, after which the Mohil country was split up into sixteen portions, and the Mohils were thus greatly weakened. Meghū's successor at Chápar was Ráná Barsál, whose half-brother Narbad was grandson, on the mother's side, of Bíká's uncle and co-adjutor Kándhal. Jodhá again attacked the Mohils, expelled Barsál, and Narbad, and took possession of Dronpur and Chápar, where he established his son Jogáyat. But Jogáyat was weak in character and could not hold his own, and at last his very wife complained at Jodhpur that the hard-won lands were being lost to the

Báthors through her husband's want of good sense (lakkhan). Jodhá thereupon sent Bídá, Bíká's own younger brother, to supersede Jogáyat, and he, as

vigorous and judicious as Jogáyat was weak, soon brought the Mohils to subjection. He restored their lands to them under deeds of grant from himself, and connected himself by marriage with a wealthy Mohil, named Jabe, who was at feud with his brethren. With the lady Bídá got a dowry of 100 horse, 200 camels, and a lakh of rupees, and in return for these favours gratified his father-in-law by the slaughter of a number of the latter's relations. While Bídá was prospering in his new territory, Barsál and Narbad had gone to Dehli accompanied by Bágh Singh, a discontented son of Kándhal. They served the Emperor so well for several years that they obtained an imperial grant of Dronpur, which the Hissár Subadár was desired to

Bídá, driven out by the Mohil place them in possession of. The force brought chiefs, aided by an imperial force by Sárang Khán the Subadár and the Mohils was under the Hissár Subadár.

too strong for Bídá to oppose; so he retired to Bíkánr. Bíká at once exerted himself to recover the lost lands, but he could obtain no help from his father Jodhá, whom Bídá had offended by refusing to give him Ládnó near Sútjángarh, and certain other Mohil villages coveted by the Ráo. However, Bíká got together 8,000 men with the assistance of his father-in-law, Shekhá of Púgal, and of the Sihán Chief, and leaving Nápo the Sánkhlá in charge of the fort, and having obtained encouragement from Karníjí at Desh-núk, he marched against the enemy. Bíká induced Bágh Singh to meet him alone at a certain tree, to which each was to ride under pretence of exercising his horse in the jungle. Bágh Singh, stung by the reproaches of Bíká, was soon induced to give up the Mohils, and mutual pledges were exchanged. Bágh Singh then promised to induce the Mohils, whose horses were worn out, to fight on foot and on the left of their allies from Hissár, when Bíká would find it easy to dash his horse into the midst of them and so destroy them. The next day the opposing forces moved out to battle. Bíká's were in two divisions,—one under Kándhal, which charged the Hissár horse; the other, led

Bídá re-established by the aid of Bíká, rushed upon the dismounted Mohils. The of his brother Bíká.

result was, that Ráná Barsal and Narbad were killed, and Sárang Khán put to flight by Kándhal after a very hard fight. Bíká, after a few days' residence at Dronpur, restored all the lands to Bídá, which the latter thus held from his brother.

Kándhal continued the feud with Sárang Khán and ravaged Hissár from his camp, which was at the tank of Sáhíba near the Hissár country. Bágh Singh, now reconciled to his father, was absent at Cháchábád, founded by the latter; but three of his sons were with Kándhal. To Sáhíba, Sárang Khán brought a large force, and Kándhal went forth to meet him. As the Báthor's horse bounded forward, a girth broke, and he found it necessary to dismount and adjust his saddle. He called to his sons to keep the men fronting the foe till he could join them, but before he could again mount Sárang

Khán had charged and routed the whole force, so that Kándhal was left supported by but 15 men on foot. Though 73 years of age, the old Ráthor made a gallant fight. Twenty-one assailants fell round him, and he crossed

Kándhal killed in battle with blades with Sárang Khán himself, but numbers prevailed, and Ráwat Kándhal at length fell. The date of his death was Pauh budi 5, Sambat 1546. One sati ascended his funeral

Biká, aided by his father, pile. On the news of his brave uncle's death avenges his uncle and kills the reaching Biká, he vowed that he would not eat Súbádár. bread until he had avenged Kándhal. He at once

prepared to march against Sárang Khán, and aid was solicited from Ráo Jodhá, who assented; and he himself accompanying his force met that of Biká's at Dronpur. Thence they marched against Hissár, and in a battle fought at village Káns, the Súbádár was killed. A son of Biká's was also slain, and there were heavy losses on both sides; but Ráwat Kándhal was thus avenged within a few months of his death. On the return of the forces to Dronpur, Ráo Jodhá sent for his son Biká and addressed him solemnly. He told him that he had been brave and fortunate, and had filled his father's heart with delight; he had won extensive territories, and his father now asked two things

Biká resigns all future claim of him; first, that he should give up Ládno in the to Márvár, but stipulates that Mohil country to Jodhpur, and, second, that he if he becomes head of the family, the heir-looms are to be should remain content with what he had won, and never seek to deprive his brothers in Jodhpur of any part of their patrimony. "Promise me this,"

added the old chief, and Biká dutifully replied that he would never take Jodhpur from his brothers, and, notwithstanding that he could not admit that his father had any right to Ládno, he would freely give up that too. But he must beg that the cherished family heir-looms, the throne, the royal umbrella brought from Kanauj and other objects of veneration, be sent to him if he became the eldest member of the family. Jodhá promised that these should be sent.

In Sambat 1547, Ráo Jodhá died; his son and successor, Satal, did not long survive him, and then Sújoji sat on the "gadi." Death of Ráo Jodhá Sambat 1547. Biká, as eldest living son of Jodhá, then sent his

Biká claims the heir-looms.

And not obtaining them invades Jodhpur.

Detail of his forces.

faithful master of the stables, Belá Parihá, for the promised heir-looms; but in spite of full explanations, Ráo Sújoji refused to part with them. Biká thereupon collected his forces larger now than ever before. Biká from Dronpur brought him 3,000 men; Ardak Mal, son of Kándhal, 1,000, from his estate of Sáhíba; Rájsi, another son, and Banirji, a third, brought contingents from their estates at Rájásar and Cháchábád, respectively; uncle Mandlo brought a force from his village Saroundá; and the Bhátis of Púgal and the Johyás likewise contributed. Altogether the army assembled was about 30,000 men.

As usual, Biká asked and received encouragement from Karniji. Sújoji's force met Biká's a kos from Jodhpur, but it was put to flight and driven through the city, which for six hours was given up to plunder. The fort was then invested, and was soon reduced to straits for want of water, and Sújoji's mother proposed a conference. To it went, on the part of Biká, the men who many years before left Jodhpur with him when he set off on his adventures, and who ever since had been his trusted

counsellors and servants. However no terms could be arrived at, until a few days subsequently Sūjoji's mother, Jasmadeji, herself came to Bika, who agreed to accept with some additions the heir-

Obtains heir-loom.

Bika delivers his brother from the clutches of the Ajmir Sūbadār.

with Sūjoji, marched with a force to Ajmir to effect the release of his brother Bar Singh, who had been confined by the Sūbadār for plundering.

Bika's next expedition was against Khandelā in Shekhwattī, Rimal, the Thākūr of which plundered in his territory. Expedition against Khandelā. Two kos from Khandelā an engagement took place, in which the Thākūr and his followers fled. The town of Khandelā was sacked by the victors, and much spoil obtained. Amongst the spoils was Prān Kanwar, a sister of the Thākūr and a widow of a Tanwar Rājpūt. This lady was received into Bika's zanānā and became the mother of Umrāji and Bisoji, whose descendants subsequently became the hereditary stewards of the Mahājan and Būkarkho estates respectively, and are still families of some importance. Bika's last expedition was against

Expedition against Rewāri. Rewāri. Rir Mal of Khandelā was then at Delhi; and, supported by 8,000 imperial troops under Nawāb Hindāl, he was permitted to oppose Bika, who, however, when attacked simultaneously by the Nawāb† and the Thākūr during a battle, slew them both with his own hand. He now ruled in peace at toikānir; his territory consisted of more than 3,000 villages, not including territory near Rewāri or Hissār, which, though occasionally occupied, evidently was never held for any length of time. The limits

Bika's territory at his death of the State seem to have been very much what comprised 3,000 villages. they are at present, though, from subsequent insecurity and misgovernment, the 3,000 villages of Bika are now reduced to 1,800. Probably, the completeness of Bika's conquests are exaggerated. Thus Chūrū did not, I believe, come into the hands of the Rāthors for two generations after Bika.

Some of Bika's grants to Chārāns are still enjoyed by their descendants. Grants to Chārāns. Khāri he granted by a copper-plate deed to Chāran Madhu Lālā, and Lūnbhasar by an ordinary deed. Chāran Chanan Khiriya received a gift of a lakh of rupees (lakh pusāo). Bika died Asoj Sūd 3, Sambat 1561. Seven

Death of Bika; sambat 1561.

Naro succeeds,

His sons were ten in number, of whom Narō succeeded him.

Narō.

This prince only occupied the "gadī" from Asoj Sūd 15 to Māgh Sūd 8, when he died childless, and Lūnkaran, his brother, succeeded.

Lūnkaran.

Lūnkaran, son of Bika, was born Māgh Sūd 10, Sambat 1526. Lūnkaran succeeds. Sambat (A. D. 1470), and sat upon the "gadī", Pauh, Sambat 1561, (A. D. 1505).

* They consisted of the Kanauj relics, a throne, umbrella and "Chonris," a dagger (the gift of Harbir the Sankhlā), a Sūligrām stone called "Karan garbh," the 18-armed image of Devi (at Nagniji now), the Bairi Sāl (foe-frightening) Nagārī, the gift of the saint Thapan Jambha, the steed Dal Singār, and the ancient cooking cauldrons.

† Hindāl, brother of Bābar, was governor of Mewāt at one time, and would be naturally brought into collision with Bika if the latter attacked Rewāri; but he was killed beyond the Indus, and not as here related.

One of his first acts was to pay his respects to Karníji, who still lived, and his first military expedition was against the "Bhúmiás" (landholders), whom Bíká had deprived of their estates, and who were now plundering the country. I will mention in detail those who joined his standard, as every now and then it may be interesting to note what the Bíkánír "kher" or levy consisted of. There were the Ráo's *brothers*—

1. Gharsí, whose seat was at Gárib; 2. Rájasi; 3. Megh Ráj; 4. Kelan; 5. Deosi; 6. Bijai Ráj; Amarsi, Biso. His *cousins*, Sansár Chand, son of Bidá, whose seat was Pariyáro, and another who could raise 3,000 men; Ude Karan of Dronpur, also a son of Bidá; Ráwat Ráj Singh, son of Kándhal, from Rájásar; Thákur Banírjí, grandson of Kándhal, from Cháchábád; Thákur Ardak Mal, son of Kándhal, from Sáhíba; Thákur Mahes Dás, son of Mándal (Kándhal's brother) from Sáronda; Ráo Harji Bháti, son of Shekho of Púgal; Thákur Bágh Bháti, another son of Shekho, but settled at Ráimalwáli; Girdhar, son of Bela the Parihár, stable-master from Belásar; Nagraj Mútsaddi, son of Bár Singh the Bacháwat; Mahtá Sábib Mal, son of Lálá the Bed; Mahesh Dás, son of Nápa the Sínkhla. The whole force amounted to about 20,000 men.

Dadrewá, to the east of Bíkánír, was the rallying point of the disaffected, and for seven months no impression could be made on the place. At last the defenders, at the head of whom was one Mán Singh Depálot, made a sally, together with most of his men. Gharsí of Gárib distinguished himself on this occasion, and Dadrewá fell into Lúnkaran's hands. Taking advantage of a feud amongst the Káim Khánis who possessed

120 Káim Khání villages obtained. Fatahpur (in the present Sikar territory) Lúnkaran interposed, and as the price of the assistance rendered, or of future neutrality, received 120 villages. The Cháyal Rájputs were now attacked. Their country Chayalwára consisted of 440 villages, and was situated on the present Sirsá and Hissár border. The whole territory was annexed. Lúnkaran effected the first distinguished matrimonial alliance which occurs in the history of the Bíkánír house. Rái Malji, Rána of Chitor, sent the cocoanut, and, accompanied by four of Karníji's grandsons, Lúnkaran, in Sambat 1570 (A.D. 1514), set off for Chitor. Kanwar Sāngá, the Rána's son and the subsequent opponent of Bábar, came three kos to meet him, and the marriage was celebrated with all due pomp; it being on record that the Chárans received 20 elephants and 200 horses.

Chayalwára annexed. Lálá the Cháran, to whom Bíká had granted village Khári, Cháran-like, now involved Bíkánír in a war with Jaisalmír. Being on a visit to that state, Lálá resented the contempt with which the Ráwal spoke of the Ráthors. Whereupon the Ráwal exclaimed that he would give to Bráhmans all the land in Jaisalmír which Ráthors could ride over. Lálá carried the challenge to Lúnkaran, who summoning all his array marched to Rájábái on the Jaisalmír border. Thence a body of Ráthors made a rapid incursion, watering their horses at Gharsísar in Jaisalmír, while the Ráwal, Devi Dás by name, advanced to meet the enemy. He had but a small force, and in the fight which occurred he was taken

War with Jaisalmír. City of Jaisalmír taken: Ráwal a prisoner.

prisoner by Sāngā, son of Bidā. The Rāwal was placed bound on an elephant in the custody of Sāngā, and so escorted to Jaisalmir, which was taken by the Bikānir troops and plundered. Lālā was then sent to make game of the Rāwal, who listened to his satirical rhymes in great confusion. Gharsisar, however, could not be taken, and after two months' stay Lūnkaran released Rāwal Devī Dās, restored the Jaisalmir fort to him, and caused his sons to be betrothed to the Rāwal's two daughters, who received a dowry of ten horses. The

Revenge of the Rāwal allied with a Sindh Nawāb. Rāwal, however, was now to have his revenge. He formed an alliance with a Sindh Nawāb and attacked the Rāo. When the contending forces

met, the Bhātīs, the Johyās, together with Ude Karan, son of Bidā, who was Lūnkaran defeated and slain jealous of his cousin, drew off, and the Bikānir through treachery of Bidāwats army fled, leaving the Rāo with his three sons to and others, Sambat 1583. defend himself. They fought desperately; the Rāo

had three horses killed under him, and then he fought on foot. Many assailants lay round him; but at length he, with his three sons and a son of Bikā's faithful Parohit Bikanśī, fell.

This fight occurred at Dosi, Sāwan Budi 4, Sambat 1583. On the news reaching Bikānir three Rānīs became satīs.

Lūnkaran's sons were—1, Jetsī, who succeeded him; 2, Pritāpsī, of whom Lūnkaran's sons. come the Pritāp Singhot Bikās; 3, Bairśī, from whose son Nāran are descended the Nārnots; 4, Ratansī, who established himself at Mahājan, and his representative is the principal Bikānir Thākūr at the present day; 5, Tej Singh, father of the Tejsot Bikās; 6, Karan Sī; 7, Kishanji; 8, Kushāl Sī; 9, Rāp Sī, whose son Bhoj Rāj held the villages of Bhela, Thethu, and Chakhū.

Karan Sī obtained a grant of Renī and furnishes another instance of the wonderful power of clever rhymers in that age. A Chāran had addressed to him a neat and adulatory couplet, for which the young prince bestowed on him a "Karor pusao," or gift of a "Karor" of rupees (*vide* Tod, Karor. Chāran's verse valued at a Vol. I, page 644). These gifts, however, are not necessarily paid in cash. In the present instance the money could not have been procured; but an equivalent was given in Karan Sī's son, Kirat Singh, whom the bard married to the daughter of a Thākūr in Sirolī, whence are descended the Kirat Singhot Bikās of that State. The couplet valued at a million sterling runs as follows:—

*"To dujo sansār
Matī sū ghariyo māndāl
To gharīo Kirtār
Kāyā huntā Karnsi."*

All the rest of the world, the universe, of dirt the Creator has formed,
But Thee, O Karansī! hath He out of his own essence formed.

Jet Sī.

Jet Sī, son of Lūnkaran, was born Kātik Būdi 8, Sambat 1546, and succeeded to the "gadi" of Bikā the day before the new moon of Sāwan, Sambat 1583 (A.D. 1526).

Jet Sī succeeds. Ude Karan, the Bidāwat Thākūr of Dronpur, whose treachery had caused the defeat and death of Lūnkaran, under pretence of aiding at the funeral

distribution of alms, came to Bikánir in hopes of being able to occupy it. But Jet Sí ordered him to leave, and a few months after marched upon

Occupies Dronpur and expels the treacherous Thákur. Dronpur, after duly doing homage to Karníjí at Deshnúk. Ude Karan fled to Nágor, then held

Successful expedition against Johyás. by a Musalmán, and Jet Sí bestowed Dronpur on SÁNGÁJÍ, a loyal grandson of Bidad. SÁNGÁJÍ was

then sent with a force to Sihan (towards the present Sirsá) against the Johyás, few of whom seem to have obeyed the summons of Lúnkaran, when a levy for the expedition against Jaisalmír was ordered, and those who did come joined the traitor, Ude Karan. The expedition was successful, and the principal Johyá, Tihán Pál, fled to Láhor.

At this period SÁNGÁJÍ, son of Ráo Pirthwí Ráj, Chief of Amer (Jaipur), SÁNGÁJÍ of Amer. by a daughter of Lúnkaran, came to Bikánir having

Jet Sí aids him to take possession of the Amer territory. quarrelled with his brethren and being anxious for assistance in seizing the "gadí" of Amer. Jet

of the force, with the addition of a Johyá and a Bháttí or two, were much the same as those of Lúnkaran's reign. The whole levy amounted to 15,000 men. SÁNGÁJÍ's brother, Ratan Singh, who then sat on the cushion of Amer, was a miserable debauchee, and all power was in the hands of

Murder of SÁNGÁJÍ's chief opponent, Karn Chand Narúká. his minister, one Tej Sí. This man was soon induced to join SÁNGÁJÍ's party, and to assist in the

murder of Karn Chand, a Narúká, who had taken many villages, and was the most active and formidable person likely to oppose SÁNGÁJÍ. The murder was shamelessly carried out, in the presence of SÁNGÁJÍ by the hand of a Bikánir Sirdár; but the brother of the victim instantly retaliated by slaying the treacherous Tej Sí, and SÁNGÁJÍ himself barely escaped the avenging dagger. The result of the expedition was that much of the Amer territory fell into the hands of SÁNGÁJÍ, who built the well-known town of SÁNGÁNIR. He did not, however, disturb his brother Ratan Singh at Amer. It so happened that one Káná, a Bikánir Cháran, had been in the service of the murdered Karn Chand, but was absent on the occasion of his death. Finding that his late master's followers, Rájputs though they were, and generously treated as they had been, had not struck a blow for their leader, he taunted them with cowardice, no doubt, in the biting Cháran style. They, however, were not disposed to run amuck, and retorted on Káná that they had done as much as he had. On this Káná swore that he would eat no bread till

Murder of SÁNGÁJÍ. he had killed SÁNGÁJÍ. Taking advantage of the presence at SÁNGÁNIR of a Bikánir sirdár (the

Mahájan Thákur), he obtained an introduction to SÁNGÁJÍ, and daily went to pay his respects, until, an opportunity offering, he stabbed the chief through the chest, and was himself killed immediately afterwards. I have briefly related this and other instances of Rájput treachery, as showing that murder followed murder in the brave days of the nation just as in modern and so-called degenerate times, notwithstanding that Rájputs who dwell only on the creditable portion of their history often state the contrary.

In Sambat 1585, Ráo Jet Sí marched to the aid of GÁNGÁJÍ, a combatant Relations with Jodhpur. for the "gadí" of Jodhpur. The lawful claimant

of the cushion was Biramde, the uncle of GÁNGÁJÍ. But the mother of the former on one occasion, when four of the chief Márvár Thákurs were detained by heavy rain in the palace, had treated them with incivility on their asking for food and lodging, while GÁNGÁJÍ's mother

cheerfully provided them with food and beds. On the death of the reigning Ráo Sújói, the Thákurs elected Gángáji as Ráo, to the exclusion of Biramde, who, in addition to his mother's unpopularity, was himself of feeble intellect.

Devotion of a Baniá minister. But Biramde's removal from the Jodhpur Fort was strenuously opposed by Muhtá Ráimal*, whose conduct furnishes one of the brightest instances of firm and courageous loyalty to be found in Rájput annals. As the prefix to his name implies, he was of a Baniá caste; but, like many men of his class, who in Rájputáná abandon commerce for state service, he was a gallant soldier. He fell in Biramde's

Gángáji and his uncle Shekhá contend for Jodhpur.

service, and his efforts for his master were fruitless. Subsequently the struggle for the "gad" lay between Gángáji and his uncle Shekhá, who, supported by powerful Thákurs, seemed to be the stronger of the two. Gángáji indeed felt his weakness so much that he proposed a division of the territory, namely, that all the land on which the "karr" grass grew should be Shekhá's, and all that on which "bharút" grew should be Gángáji's: an arrangement which would have given the most desert soil to the latter. But Shekhá, following the advice of his counsellors, rejected this offer and resolved on contending for the whole of Márwár. It was at this juncture that Ráo Jet Sí of Bikánir was applied to by Gángáji, and the force which marched to the aid of the latter was 6,000 strong. Shekhá obtained assistance from the Khán of Nágór, which is on the south Bikánir border. He came with 20,000 men, and Gángáji again proposed terms which Shekhá peremptorily refused. A hard

Jet Sí aids Gángáji. Shekhá is defeated and killed.

fight ensued, in which the Nágór Khán, suspecting a secret understanding between Shekhá and Gángá, and astonished by the violence of Gángá's attack, drew off his forces, and Shekhá was defeated. Mortally wounded, he was discovered on the field by Gángáji and Jet Sí, who revived him with opium. Gángáji taunted him with his failure, and he reproached Jet Sí for

* Though Ráimal's history belongs to Márwár, I give a short account of him as a set-off to the tales of murder and treason already related. Ráimal being unable to maintain Biramde at Jodhpur, removed him to Sojat, which he had soon to defend. An attempt to assassinate Ráimal resulted only in the death of the assassin by the hand of the intended victim, and when his principal supporter pointed out to him that Biramde was a fool and, being childless, that his possessions must eventually revert to Gángáji's family, so that it was manifestly absurd to continue assisting him, Ráimal replied that others were free to go; but that those who wished to take down Biramde's bed from Sojat must step on Ráimal's body to do it. Ráimal was accordingly abandoned by all but 700 horse, but still Gángáji ventured only on slow encroachments, and Ráimal, who was all watchfulness, managed to surprise and destroy a body of his followers during the Holi festival, and subsequently for two years baffled all his exertions. An incident then occurred, which, as exhibiting the meanness of Biramde, enhances the merit of Ráimal, who could be steadfastly faithful to such a master. A Thákur of weight, named Hardás, having been deprived of his estate by Gángáji joined Biramde, who lent him his horse for a fight with the enemy. Hardás emerged covered with wounds, as also was the horse. On seeing their condition, Biramde, without noticing the wounds of Hardás received in his service, reproached him for getting his valuable horse worth Rs. 5,000 so injured. In a rage Hardás called him a degenerate Rájput and left Sojat with his wounds undressed. Falling in with Shekhá, Biramde's half-brother, the latter treated him with great sympathy and kindness, and took advantage of the occurrence to introduce himself at Sojat and offer his services to Biramde's mother. She accepted them in spite of the protest of Ráimal, who saw that Shekhá aimed at identifying himself with Biramde's cause only to supplant him, which, considering his character, seemed easy enough. Ráimal finding his advice disregarded, and resolved not to play into the hands of a treacherous schemer, determined to manifest his loyalty by dying in battle for his master. He formally devoted himself by making a circuit (parikrama) round Biramde's bed, and then sallied forth with his followers to the fight, in which he fell as he had resolved. His death was soon followed by the expulsion from Sojat of Biramde and his mother, and its occupation by Gángáji.

interfering in a family dispute. "My condition will one day be yours," he said, and then expired.

In Sambat 1595, the disappearance or translation of the old Cháran woman Karniji of Deshnúk took place. A short time previous to her end, she went to Jaisalnir to cure the Ráwal Jet Sí of a tumour. This she is reported to have effected by passing her hand over the sore. She likewise cured an aged carpenter of blindness, by causing him to attempt to look at her. On her way back from Jaisalnir she alighted at a place called Karárdian Talái, where for some time she sat in contemplation with her head covered. At length a jet of flame issued from her body, completely enveloped her, and she was seen no more. Karniji, as an avatar of Deví, is still looked upon as the protectress of Bíkánir,

Karniji's temple at Deshnúk greatly venerated.

and is greatly revered by all classes. Her village of Deshnúk, and more especially her temple, is the most inviolable sanctuary in the country, and in other parts of India temples have been raised in her honor. Thus there is one in the upper fort at Alwar, built not by a Ráthor as one would have expected, but by a Rání from Sháhpurá of the Sesodiá clan.

The same year that Karniji ceased to be in the flesh Ráo Jet Sí had to fight the "Turks," as Musalmáns from the north were called. The quarrel arose out of the occupation of Bhatner, which a son of Kándhal, under orders from the Ráo, had wrested from the Cháyál Rájpúts, who had taken it from the Johyáts. A Jain priest (Sri Puji) of Bhatner, having been offended by the Bíkánir party, went off to Dehli, where he told

Mughals take Bhatner and invade Bíkánir.

Prince Kámran, son of Bábar, of the fine fort on the border of the desert, and excited in him a desire of possessing it. He came with a large body of troops, and having taken the place marched upon Bíkánir. Much dread was there felt of the terrible Turks, and Jet Sí feared to fight them. He derived little comfort from his counsellors, but when he consulted the oracle at Deshnúk, he recovered confidence; for Karniji was propitious, manifested a hand, spoke graciously, and on the Ráo's laying his arms before her image caused an arrow to fit itself to the bow string. The Ráo thereupon made a sudden night attack on Kámran's force. Supernatural assistance, in the shape of thousands of quoits flung from unseen

Are repulsed.

hands upon the Turks, secured the victory to Bíkánir. Kámran exclaimed that they must be violating some Pir's tomb by encamping on it, and galloped off. At the village of Chotriya his umbrella was dropped in the hurry of flight, and the village being bestowed on Chárans, it is preserved by them to the present day. The Turk force fled in such panic that it did not recover itself till a hundred kos lay between it and Bíkánir. But, in spite of Karniji, dark days were now coming upon Bíkánir, and the prophecy of Shekhá approached fulfilment.

Málde of Jodhpur attempted to poison his father the usurper Gángáji, but was baffled by the devotion of the Bráhman cup-bearer, who, to save the father from death and the son from crime, himself swallowed the fatal draught. Málde, however, was not affected by remorse; he believed that either he or his father must perish, and he still resolved that he would not be the victim. Finding Gángáji washing his teeth on the top of a bastion of the fort, he approached him and made as though he would filially embrace him. His arms once round his father, he raised him from the ground, lifted him over the battlements, and dashed him on the boulders far beneath.

He then took possession of the "gadi," but was on bad terms with all Rajwára. On Bikánir he began a series of aggressions, and at length marched in person with 20,000 men against it, his lieutenants being Thákurs Kúmpá and Pacháin. They encamped a few miles from Bikánir, at village Sowa, where Ráo Jet Sí met them after placing the Sánkhliá Kiladár and his nephew Bhoj Ráj in charge of the fort and city.

Jet Sí appears to have been particular about duly paying his debts, and it so happened that a Pathán horse-dealer, to whom he owed 20,000, followed him to camp.

Carelessness of Jet Sí before the enemy. On learning that the merchant had not been paid as he supposed, he was so disturbed that, after giving orders to his personal attendant that his absence was to be kept secret, he rode with the Pathán by night to Bikánir to call his treasurers, two Saiyads, to account. The merchant, anxious to appear as willing to give credit as the Ráo to pay cash, objected to receive the money at a time when the chief had so much weightier business on his hands, and much time was spent in wrangling. At length the Ráo set off to return to his camp. Meanwhile

Dispersion of Bikánir force, and death of Jet Sí. a rumour spread that the Ráo had abandoned the army, and after a time all the sirdárs came in a body to his tent to enquire. The "darbári," or attendant, averred that his master was asleep, and refused to allow them to enter the tent. They desired that the Ráo should be immediately awakened, as they had pressing business with him. On this, the darbári was obliged to confess that the Ráo was absent—news which was received with general consternation—and the impression spread that the Ráo had fled, fearing to meet the enemy in battle. Accordingly the whole force dissolved, and when shortly before day-break the Ráo returned, about a hundred chákars or household slaves were all that was left of his army. From Bikánir twenty-seven sawárs had accompanied the Ráo, who soon learnt that spies had communicated the state of affairs to Málde.

The little party was surrounded by the Jodhpur host, and the two chiefs contended hand-to-hand. Málde's horse was killed by a blow of Jet Sí's talwár, and this circumstance was regarded as a favourable omen and subsequently served to sustain the hopes of the conquered Bikániris. After slaying many of their assailants, as Kándhal and Lúnkaran had done under similar circumstances, the Ráo with his twenty-seven sawárs and hundred Chákars were killed to a man. The fight occurred Chaitbudi 11, Sambat 1598 (A.D. 1541). Amongst those killed with Jet Sí was Lakní Dás, a son of the brave Parohit, who had similarly fallen with Lúnkaran and several other hereditary servants.

Málde forthwith marched upon the fort, but not before Bhoj Ráj has sent away the Ráo's family to Sísá with an escort of two hundred men. Seven of the women, however, ascended the funeral pile of their lord.

Bikánir fort invested.

The fort was invested; and Bhoj Ráj, having no means of holding out, on the fourth day resolved that he and the garrison would die sword in hand. So they drank opium water from his hand, dressed in saffron-colored garments, and having left the stamp of their vermilion-stained hands on the fort walls they threw open the gate. There number was 1,500, and amongst them were the Saiyads, whose remissness had caused Jet Sí's absence from his camp. All rushed forth and perished after slaughtering two thousand of their foes. The fort of Biká then fell into Málde's hands with about half the

Devotion of garrison. Capture of fort by Málde.

Bikánir territory, in charge of which were left Kúmpá and Pacháin. Jet Sí had thirteen sons—1, Kalian Singh, who succeeded him; 2, Bhitú Ráj, founder of the Bhitú Rájot Bikás; 3, Thákur Sí, received Sídhmukh in grant, founded Jetpur, and took Bhatner; 4, Kánji; 5, Málde. These five were all the sons of a Sodhi Rání named Kásmide, who founded village Kasmisar; 6, Sríngjí, founder of Sríngsar and of the Sríngshot Bikás, a formidable brotherhood in the present day, though not equal to the Bídáwats; 7, Surájansí, who built Surjansar; 8, Karn Senjí; 9, Púran Mal; 10, Achal Dás; 11, Mánji; 12, Bhoj Ráj; 13, Tilok Sí.

Ráo Kalian Singh.

The fortunes of the Bikánir dynasty were at this time at a lower ebb than they have ever been before or since. But Kalian Singh, son of Jet Sí, did not sit idly complaining of his ill luck; he was not, when calamity visited him, ignorant of defeat: for in his father's lifetime he had represented Bikánir in Rána Sanga's army, and was present at the great battle of Biána, when

Bábar overthrew the Rájput host. He now made Sirsá his head-quarters, from whence he ravaged the country occupied by Málde. No nobles of position threw in their lot with him, but he was loyally supported by Godára Játs, who from their location were especially capable of assisting him, and who from the circumstances of their first submission to Biká felt themselves in a peculiar manner bound to support his family. The Ráo's brother, Bhitú Ráj, went with fifty horsemen to Dehli, where the Emperor Húmayún gave him service and treated him kindly. Great things were to come of this diplomatic move, though to go himself or to depute a relative to the Dehli Court was but the commonplace act of every chief and noble in misfortune.

Kalian Singh, son of Jet Sí, posts himself at Sirsá.

Is aided by the Godára Játs.

Bhitú Ráj, brother of Kalian Singh, goes to the Dehli Court.

Though his chief subjects held aloof, an important ally joined Ráo Kalian Singh at Sirsá, namely, Biramde Thákur of Mertia. Jet Sí joined by Biramde Thákur of Mertia. Biramde, a place more prolific in great Ráthor warriors than any other. Biramde, after the battle in which Shekhá was killed and Gángá obtained the "gádi" of Jodhpur, had seized as plunder a fine elephant named "Dariyái" which belonged to Shekhá's supporter, the Khán of Nágor. The animal was so large that the gate of the Mertia Fort was too small to admit it, and had to be broken down for the purpose; a circumstance which was thought inauspicious. Presently Ráo Gángá and his son Málde claimed "Dariyái," but the Thákur objected to give him up until Málde himself came by invitation to be feasted and to receive the elephant. Málde, however, peremptorily demanded "Dariyái" before he would appear at the Thákur's entertainment; and Biramde, irritated at the young man's want of trust and impatience, called him an "impetuous lad," and told him to go home. Málde went, but swore that "as sure as his name was Málde," he would "sow radishes (almost the only garden vegetable in the sandy tract) on the site of the Mertia Fort." On a conciliatory message being sent by Málde's father Gángá, the elephant was given up; but Málde did not forgive the Thákur, and on attaining power banished him to Ajmír. There and elsewhere he performed a series of daring and whimsical exploits, which are all detailed in the "Kiyánt;" but as they belong more to the history of Márwár than to that of Bikánir, I pass them

over. Enough has been said to show that Kalián Singh obtained in Biramde a gallant and distinguished, though somewhat reckless, supporter. The Thákur, believing that Biramde follows Bhíúráj to Dehli, more towards the attainment of the object in view

was to be done at Dehli than at Sírsá, obtain permission to follow the Ráo's brother, Bhíúráj, with whom he resided on arrival at the imperial city. Bhíúráj had established friendly relations with the Emperor's *wazir*, and through him

Bhíúráj becomes intimate with Biramde obtained access to the Emperor Húmá-yún. with Sher Sháh, the future Emperor. At this time, according to the "Kiyánt,"* the future

usurper Sher Sháh was with his father at Dehli, in command of a body of horse, the pay of which was in arrears; so that the commandants were much embarrassed. Bhíúráj, through his intimacy with the *wazir*, was enabled to facilitate the settlement of the account; and a friendship previously existing between Sher Sháh and the Rájput thus was strengthened. Bhíúráj is said to have accompanied Sher Sháh, when the latter went with his father to stir up the insurrection, which was to place him on the throne; and a short, though incorrect, account of this event is recorded in the

"Kiyánt", which also narrates the flight of Húmá-yún and the birth of Akbar.† The day that Sher Sháh seated on the throne he had usurped was for the first time receiving the homage of the nobles, Biramde went alone into the

presence; for Bhíúráj happened that day to be occupied with the performance of his father's "shrádh" or memorial service. Sher Sháh, observing Biramde, said, "What! You are still here!" "Hazrat, where else should I go?" was the reply. "Become a Musalmán, and you shall recover your patrimony," returned the Emperor. Biramde remained silent, and presently went sadly back to his friend Bhíúráj, and told him of the new and impossible condition of success. Bhíúráj, who was a man of great tact, told Biramde that he had showed none, and the next day went undismayed to the darbár, accompanied by Biramde, on noticing whom Sher Sháh asked whether he was going to comply. Biramde was again speechless, and the Emperor turning to Bhíúráj offered him the same terms. Bhíúráj replied that they were both ready to accept the Emperor's religion which was a noble one, but he regretted that the Emperor should have imposed such a condition, because it showed a forgetfulness of old friendship. Whereupon the Emperor laughed and said he was only joking, and knew that two more votaries would not add much to the glory of Islam, and then with an appreciation of the character of the two men he added, "Although I may lose Dehli, you will surely recover your lands held for generations by your ancestors; but Biramde will never keep his, even if placed in Bhíúráj and Kalián Singh possession." He then told Bhíúráj that he intended to make a pilgrimage to Pír Khwájá at Ajmír,

joined in the campaign against Málda. and Ráo Kalián Singh must join him with a force.

The Bikanír dynasty had now emerged from the lowest depths of adversity. Ráo Kalián Singh when he fled to Sírsá was,

Bikanír nobles join Kalián Singh. as I have before mentioned, unfollowed by any Sirdárs of note; but no sooner was Bhíúráj's success at Dehli known than Ráwat Kishen Dás of Ráwatsar, an influential Bikanír noble, appeared at Sírsá, and was gladly received by the Ráo, who repressed the disposition of some of his people to reproach the Ráwat with having abandoned the Ráo's father in his extremity and the Ráo himself in misfortune.

*Musalmán histories do not support this account, which is only given as the Bikanír version.

†Regarding Húmá-yún, see Appendix.

"Now that the Ráwat has joined us," he said, "we shall get our own again, not so, had he died with Jet Sí." Thus stimulated, the Ráwat began to organize a force to operate in Bikanír, whilst Ráo Kalián Singh acted as ordered with the imperial army. He succeeded in collecting 6,000 men, and the Johyá Chief, whose country was in and near the present Sirsá District, came with 4,000 more. With this aid the Ráwat within twenty days expelled the Jodhpur troops from two posts, Lúnkaransar and Gáribdesar, east of Bikanír. He then invested Binásar, an important position in front of the Bikanír Fort, where Thákur Kúmpá commanded in person. The Ráwat promising that Kúmpá and his garrison should be allowed to retire with all honor, called upon him either to give up the place to those alone entitled to occupy it, or else to come out like a Rájpút and fight in the open. But Kúmpá was too prudent, and would neither surrender nor fight, but he sent to Málde begging for aid. Meanwhile, the Emperor had marched from Dehli with a large host. Bhíúrāj was in high favor, and had received Rs. 30,000 from the imperial treasury to defray his expenses. Two marches from Dehli, Ráo Kalián Singh joined the army which proceeded towards Ajmír, Bhíúrāj and Biramde always in the van. Ajmír reached, Biramde sent money and letters to his vassals at Mertia, calling upon them to join him, while Kalián Singh communicated with the Ráwat who was pressing hard on Kúmpá at Bikanír.

At this juncture Málde, who saw that he must fight a battle at Ajmír, resolved to abandon Bikanír, and orders were accordingly sent to Kúmpá, who then gladly availed himself of the Ráwat's offer to allow him to return unmolested to Jodhpur if the fort were surrendered. The date of the recovery of the fort was Pauh Sudi 15, Sambat 1601, or two years and nine months after the loss of it. But, though the authority of Ráo Kalián Singh was thus re-established within his state, he felt that the fate of himself and his principality depended on the result of the struggle at Ajmír, where Málde had marched with 40,000 men.

Biramde made a clever attempt to engender suspicion between Málde and his generals Kúmpá* (who had just returned from Bikanír) and Jet Sí of Bagro. As his brother nobles, he must have been well acquainted with them; and since, when hostile Rájpút hosts are in front of one another, there is always some (not unfriendly) communication between them, he had no difficulty in arranging an interview with the two Thákurs, at which he apparently urged that he wanted Sirohí talwars and blankets, and that it would be a good-natured act if they would get them for him, he at once advancing Rs. 40,000 for the purpose. With the lax sense of duty of a Rájpút and the great need of cash, but probably without any treasonable intent, the two Thákurs seem to have readily assented, Kúmpá undertaking to supply

the talwars, Jet Sí the blankets. As soon as they had got the money, Biramde opened communication with Málde, warning him that his generals were bribed with Dehli gold, and that if he doubted it he should send spies to their tents and ascertain if they were not unduly flush of cash. This Málde did, and discovered that large sums of money had lately come into their possession. For a time he was full of suspicion and uneasiness, but Biramde's intention seems to have

* Kúmpá is mentioned by Ferishta.

been frustrated by the frankness of Málde's emissary, and the real nature of the transaction transpired.

Proposed duel.

The Emperor's *wazir* now suggested that the quarrel should be settled by duel* (*ekán ki beth*).

The idea is stated to have found favor with Sher Sháh, who consulted Biramde, telling him he had a Pathán who wished to be his champion. Biramde asked to see the man, and on his appearing told the Emperor that if he sent him and two more with him, Málde could produce a man (one Bidú, son of Bháram) who would strip the three of their armour. The notion of a duel was consequently abandoned, and the Emperor sent word to Málde that he meant to fight the next morning. The reply was, "good." It should be observed, that this sending notice of an intention to attack is a Rájput practice, which, though so stated in the "*Kiyánt*," it is not likely that Sher Sháh imitated. It is probable that the "*Kiyánt*" is more accurate in relating that Kalián Singh sent to remind his enemy that the quarrel was one between themselves, and in the approaching battle they ought to have no

difficulty in finding one another. However, the Complete defeat of Málde by imperial forces. two Ráos apparently did not meet in fight, for both survived the day. Málde's army was utterly destroyed, and Kúmpá and Panchain, the two Thákurs lately employed in the invasion and occupation of Bikánir, were both killed. Málde escaped with a small body of men to the hills, where he had long to wait before he recovered his territory. Jodhpur was defended gallantly by its Killadár, but want of water compelled him to evacuate the fort, and he fell with 300 men in a gallant sally. Biramde recovered his fief of Mertia, but before he went there he cut down all the mango-trees at Jodhpur by way of revenge on Málde, for having cut the strings of all the musicians' instruments when he occupied Mertia.

The Ráo was now at liberty to return to Bikánir; but he first conferred

The title of "Restorer of lost land, &c.," conferred on Bhiúráj. on his brave and sagacious brother Bhiúráj the title of "The Restorer of lost land" (*Gat bhumi ka bahnri*), a title borne to the present day by his descendants, the Bhiúrájot Bikás; and Bhiúráj's memory is likewise perpetuated by the name of the village Bhiusar which he founded.

On arrival at Bikánir, Kalián Singh's first act was to visit Deshnúk, to return thanks to Karníj. He was not accompanied by his brother, who with Biramde had to return with the Emperor to Dehli,

Return of Biramde to Mertia and of Bhiúráj to Bikánir.

where they obtained permission to go home. Bhiúráj accompanied Biramde to Mertia, where the latter publicly manifested his gratitude; and when he reached Bikánir, the Ráo also again addressed him in Darbár as the "Restorer," a designation than which none could confer more honor on, or afford more gratification to, a Rájput. Ráwat Kishen Dás received as a reward for his services Jetpur, still occupied by his descendants.

Fifteen or sixteen years after the recovery of Bikánir, Kalián Singh again

Kalián Singh aids Biramde's successor against Málde. sent a force into Jodhpur to assist Jaimal, son and successor of Biramde, against Málde, who, having

recovered Jodhpur, was again threatening Mertia. Málde was once more defeated and forced to retreat to a camp at some

*The proposal does not seem to have been an extraordinary one, *vide* Tod, Vol. I, page 628, and Ferishta, Briggs' Translation, Vol. II, page 245.

distance, where his discomfiture was completed by a Chamár, whom Jaimal, contemptuously sent to Málde with a "nagará," or kettle-drum, which the latter had lost in the fight. The Chamár, proud of an opportunity of beating the Ráo's "nagará," kept sounding it as he approached the camp. Málde, thinking it heralded an attack, retired; and, as the sound still drew near, continued his retreat to Jodhpur.

Some time after, the Emperor's Deputy at Ajmir, Háji Khán Pathán, being attacked by Málde, besought assistance from the Bikanír force sent to aid Subadar of Ajmir against Málde. Ráo of Bikanír and the Rána of Mewár. Each sent 5,000 men, but the Bikanír force seems to have been delayed; for before it arrived, Málde had withdrawn from the contest, and the Rána, as an acknowledgment of the aid rendered, had asked for Háji Khán's only elephant and his mistress. Notwithstanding that the Rána's Rájput servants pointed out the un-Rájput-like character of the demand, the Rána persisted in it, whereupon Háji Khán formed an alliance with his late foe Málde, and the two combined beat the Rána and then attacked and took Mertia, which thus at length fell into Málde's hands. The chopping and changing of friends and foes probably puzzled Bikanír, which, taking advantage of its contingent being late for the fight and therefore uncommitted to either party, kept altogether out of the complication.

Ráo Kalián Singh never appears to have recovered his strength entirely.

Continued weakness of the Bikanír Darbár.

Though he lived for twenty-seven years after his restoration, he engaged in no war except that with Málde, with whom he could not safely make peace, and on neither of the occasions when he sent a force into Márwár did it exceed 7,000 men. On the last but 5,000 were sent, and, as already stated, no effort seems to have been made to save Mertia from Málde, which would imply a sense of weakness. The only Sirdárs who accompanied the expeditions were the Ráo's brother, Sringji, the Mahájan Thákur, Banirji, the representative of Kándhal, the Púgal Ráo, Ráwat Kishan Dás of Jetpur, and Naranji, grandson of Lunkaran, on whom Kalián Singh had conferred an estate, and from whom the Nárnot Ráthors spring. The Ráo's distinguished brother, Bhiúráj, seems to have rested on his honors, and another brother, Thákur Sí, who held Sidmúkh and Jetpur (not Kishen Dás' village), likewise does not appear in the two Márwár expeditions. But he was the leader of an enterprise which is thus told.

Thákur Sí's estate was situated in the north-east of the Bikanír territory,

Thákur Sí, brother of the Ráo, takes Bhatnér by stratagem.

and Jetpur, where he resided, was within a long night's ride of Bhatnér, which was then in the possession of the Bháttí tribe of Cháyal, with whom Thákur Sí was on bad terms. The Sirdár's house (Kotri) was a small one, and afforded insufficient accommodation for his wife, a Jaisalmír lady, who had been bred in a palace. One day, at the height of the hot weather, Thákur Sí was sitting outside in a "chaubará," or arcaded reclining-room, and his wife bathing inside the house, when a storm came on, covering everything with dust. The lady, in the extremity of discomfort, exclaimed, "This is the lot of women who marry those who have no decent place to live in." Thákur Sí overheard the speech, and it gave force to designs he had long cherished against Bhatnér. It chanced that a Bhatnér oilman (teli) had married at Jetpur, where he came to bring home his wife. Thákur Sí, hearing singing in the house of the wife's father, enquired, and ascertained that a Bhatnér oilman was in the village, and the following day the man came to

pay his respects to the Sirdár. Thákur Sí asked many questions about Bhatnér, and the conversation was prolonged until the oilman was summoned by his friends to a meal. The Thákur, however, would not let him go, and said he must stay and eat with him; for since he was a son-in-law of one of his villagers, he regarded him as his own son-in-law.

Soon the Havildár of the cooks announced dinner, and the Sirdár took the "teli" and seated him beside himself. From his own dishes he gave him "siro" (a sweetmeat), "purís" (chapátis made with ghee), rice, dál, "púláo" "sabúni" (a sweetmeat), &c. The "teli," who "had never seen such a feast," ate to his heart's content, and went away highly delighted and praising the great kind Sirdár. Thákur Sí kept the oilman for fifteen days, feasting him, giving "atr," and making the slave-girls from behind the pardá talk and sing for his amusement. After this course of entertainment the Sirdár had no difficulty in obtaining the "teli's" promise of assistance in the execution of any plot against Bhatnér. He lived in the Bhatnér Fort itself, so spies were sent back with him, and full information regarding the locality obtained. Immediately afterwards, the villagers of Jetpur observed two long "múnj" grass cables being made under the direction of the Sirdár, with wooden bars three cubits long inserted into each at intervals of a cubit. They were told that the apparatus was harness for an elephant; in reality it was, of course, a large rope-ladder. Preparations were complete, when word arrived from the oilman that Ahmad, the chief and most vigorous Cháyál, had left the fort to marry his son, and that the Sirdár should act at once.

With two thousand men Thákur Sí rode off by night to Bhatnér; the ladder was drawn up by the "teli" and secured to an embrasure; the Ráthors ascended in safety and surprised the Cháyáls, who were killed to the number of five hundred men, the Sirdár's loss being three hundred. The fort keys were then sent to Ráo Kalián Singh at Bikánir, but he returned them and bestowed

Bhatnér on Thákur Sí. The Jaisalmir lady was now sent for and installed in grand apartments, where, in due form (nazar and nachrol), she

The capture suggested by his wife.

received her lord, who made

Thákur Sí holds Bhatnér for twenty years.

the surrounding perganás

The Súbadár at length takes it, and Thákur Sí falls in defending it.

Accordingly invested, but for a long time without success. At length the pressure of the siege became irresistible, the women had to be sent away, and the last desperate Rájput sally made. Thákur Sí fell with many followers, and the

Thákur Sí's son recovers Bhatnér owing to the favor of the Emperor.

Ráo at Bikánir, went to Dehli, where he attracted the Emperor's notice by his extraordinary strength and prowess. He lifted a Persian bow which no one else could raise, and he slew a lion without weapons. The Emperor was so pleased with him that he desired him to ask a favor, whereupon he begged for his patrimony ("Watan"), which was immediately restored to him, and Bhatnér became re-attached to Bikánir. The young Thákur commemorated the event by building a temple to Náthji Maharáj Sri Gorakhnáthji (a designation of Mahádeo) at Bhatnér.

On Baisákh Sudi 5, Sambat 1628, Ráo Kalián Singh died; six Ránis and ten "Pátrs"* ascended his funeral pile. He had ten sons—

Rái Singh who succeeded him, Rám Singh, Prithwi Ráj, Amar Singh, Bhánji, Surtanji, Sarangdeji, Bakhrsíji, Gopál Singh, Rágho Dás.

His sons.

Rái Singh.

Rái Singh, the eldest son of Ráo Kalián Singh, was born Sáwan Budi 12, Sambat 1598 (A.D. 1541), and took his seat on the "gadi" of Bíkánir Baisákh Sud 1, Sambat 1628 (A.D. 1571), and as usual began his reign by a visit to Deshnúk to worship Karníji.

Accession of Rái Singh.

The power of Dehli, now that Akbar was on the throne, was such as to convince the Rájput princes of the advisability of seeking the imperial favor by service. The Jáipúr Chief had already pressed the point on his Bíkánir brother, and now Rái Singh, in council with his Diwan Karm Chand Bacháwat, came to the conclusion that his "ráj" would be in danger if he held aloof. An incorrect account of Akbar's recovery of the throne of Hindústán is given in the "Kiyánt," which goes on to state that in Sambat 1633 Akbar visited the shrine at Ajmir, on which occasion by the advice of Kanwar Mán Singh of Jáipúr, Rái Singh went to Ajmir with 6,000 horse and foot to do homage to the Emperor, whom he accompanied back to Dehli, and he remained there some months.

Determines to establish relations with the Emperor.

The first service he was employed on was an expedition against the Khán of Nágor, who, in addition to being a border enemy of his own, had fallen under the Emperor's displeasure.

Defeats the Khán of Nágor.

Rái Singh defeated the Khán, and shortly after was sent to Attúk at the suggestion of the Governor, Kanwar Mán Singh, of Jáipúr, who received him with all honor, coming four kós to meet him. They were hard-pressed by the Patháns, so much so that the Emperor in person had to come to their assistance.

Is sent to serve with Mán Singh of Jáipúr near Attúk.

After a season spent in Bíkánir, during which Rái Singh betrothed his son to an Udepúr princess, the Ráo returned to Dehli, and was, according to the "Kiyánt," entrusted by the Emperor with a high command in the great military expedition against Ahmadábád in Gújarát.

Returns, and is employed in the Gújarát expedition.

The "Kiyánt's" account of it is very meagre, and the dignity of Rái Singh's position in the army exaggerated; but the fact of Rái Singh's presence with the army is confirmed by Ferishtá (page 243, Brigg's Translation).

In the severe contest which preceded the conquest of Gújarát, Bíkánir suffered severely, thirty-three thákúrs and officials of note having fallen. The Ráo's brother, Ram Singh, distinguished himself, and on the completion of the campaign he received a *mansab*; while the Ráo was, according to the Kiyánt, created a Rájá and obtained a grant of fifty-two parganá or sub-divisions. The

Heavy Bíkánir loss in Gújarát expedition.

* A concubine of the second rank.

firmán (a copy of which I obtained from the Bikanir Darbar) grants, from the month of Rabi-ul-awal of the 43rd year of the Emperor's reign (A.D. 1599), certain new parganás to Rái Rái Singh (the term rájá is not used), confirms him in the possession of old ones, and directs all officials in the new parganás to obey him as their jágirdár. The detail of the parganás (fifty-two in all) are as follow :—

... are as follow :-					
Confirmed to Rái Singh	<i>Bikánir.</i>			<i>Dáms.</i>	<i>Dáms.</i>
	Bikánir	...	...	32,50,000	
	Batlod	...	...	6,40,000	
	<i>Hissár.</i>				38,90,000
	Barantin	...	...	9,80,032	
	Sídmúkh	...	...	72,152	
					10,52,184
	<i>Subáh Ajmír.</i>				
	Donpúr {	Dronpur near the present {		...	7,81,386
	Nágór {	Sujángarh probably }			7,81,386
<i>Bhatnér.</i>					
	Bhatnér of Sirkár Hissár	...	...	9,32,742	
	Marota of Sirkár Múltán	...	...	2,80,000	
					12,12,742
<i>Sirkár Surat.</i>					
Junágarrh and 47 other parganás...			...	3,32,69,962	
					3,32,69,962
<hr/>					
TOTAL		...	...		4,02,06,274

or about ten lakhs of rupees, if the *dám* be considered a fortieth part of a rupee.

Rái Singh, in fact, held not only the present territory of the Bikanir State, with perhaps a few villages of Jodhpur and the British districts of Hissár and Sirsá, but a fine jágir in Gújarát and about Súrat.

The chronology of the "Kiyánt" is probably incorrect at this period, for the date of the firmán is many years subsequent to the great operations in Gújarát; but it appears that other firmáns had been issued previously. The grants were probably made as much on account of Rái Singh's matrimonial connections with Akbar as on account of his military services.

Sirohí affairs about this time calling for interposition, the Emperor ordered Rái Singh to go there with a force. For some time a son of the Rái of Mewár had held half Sirohí by grant from Dehli; the Deora Chohan Rájput, the old rulers of the country, being left in possession of the other half. One of them, Surtán by name, had latterly succeeded in killing or excluding those of his brethren, who considered that they had a better right than himself, and also in killing and supplanting the Mewár prince.

Rái Singh marched to Mount Abú and attacked Surtán in his fort of Achalgarh. Surtán making an imprudent sally was taken prisoner by the Thákurs of Mahájan and Dronpúr, and was carried off by Rái Singh to Bikanir, where he was confined in a palace called the "Naugará."

It should be mentioned that the Márwár chronicles attribute the subjugation of Surtán to Sri Singh, Chief of Márwár (*vide* Tod, Vol. II, page 38). But the Kiyánt's account is corroborated by Musalmán historians, see Appendix.

Judging from the marvellous liberality to Chárans or bards with which the "Kiyánt" credits Rái Singh, he would appear to have had a great appreciation of poetry, and every important circumstance of his life is attested by a ballad.

One Dúdá Cháran recited verses in honor of the Sirohí campaign, in which he made merry over a tooth of Surtán's broken by a spear-butt during his capture. The Rájá was pleased and told him to ask a boon. "Will it be granted?" enquired the Cháran. "Yes; ask," replied the Rájá. "Give me then Surtán," said Dúdá; whereupon the Rájá gave him not only Surtán, but the state of Sirohí. The episode appropriately terminated with a marriage which the Cháran brought about between Surtán and the daughter of Pirthwí Ráj, the Rájá's brother. Another instance of the Rájá's lavishness occurred at his marriage with a daughter of Ráná Ude Singh of Mewár. On that occasion he distributed ten lákhs in "tyag," or gifts, to Chárans, and when going to the women's apartments, he, at the suggestion of a Mewár slave, bestowed an elephant and ten horses on Chárans for every step, fifty in number. But on a third occasion he exceeded even this measure of extravagant bounty.

After Rái Singh's* return to Bikánír, one Shankar, a *Bhārat* or bard, recited some lines which pleased him, and the Mahārájá ordered his minister, Karm Chand, to pay him a "karor" of rupees from the treasury. When the 10,000 bags had been got out and arranged, Karm Chand reported the fact to the Mahārāja who was going to dinner. The Rájá directed that the money should be given to Shankar, as before ordered, but Karm Chand, who was anxious that the Rájá should see how much money he was on the point of parting with for nothing, remarked that Shankar ought first to present a "nazar" to the Rájá, and the delivery of the money was consequently postponed till after the Rájá's dinner. A darbár was then held, the 10,000 bags being spread out before the chief, who had divined that Karam Chand thought he did not know what he was doing. Having been assured that a whole karor was before him he said—"This a karor, why I thought a karor was much more; here, Shankar! you make an obeisance (*mujro*) for a karor and a quarter," and then and there the minstrel received a million sterling in cash and an order on a tahsil for twenty-five lakhs more!† There can be no doubt, however, that the poets, for the sake of the precedent and example, have greatly exaggerated Rái Singh's liberality to them and others. Thus it is

* Rái Singh was not at that period peculiar in his readiness to heap favors and allow license to Chárans, as the following anecdote will show:—In Sambat 1649, the Rájá went to Jaisalmir to marry a daughter of the Ráwal, and Surtán restored to Sirohí by the Cháran was likewise at Jaisalmir for the same purpose. Surtán had a Cháran, Gaipo by name, who had a habit of insultingly addressing every one as "tu," and was called in consequence "Gaipo, tu karo." Surtán fearing lest he should "tu" people at Jaisalmir had left him behind, but Gaipo had a mind to come, and he came and was present at the "Samela" or meeting of the bridegroom and bride's relatives. Here he recited some lines, which pleased Rái Singh, who gave him an elephant, mounted on which he went to his master and told him he had addressed Rájá Rái Singh, the greatest person at Jaisalmir. Surtán, who in Bikánír estimation was not superior in rank to some of Rái Singh's followers, was greatly ashamed of his Cháran whom he presently found lodged in the tent of Rám Singh, the Rájá's brother, and instead of complying with Surtán's orders to leave, he recommended Surtán to outdo Rái Singh's liberality; for, said Gaipo, notwithstanding the reputation of the Bikánír Chief and the impossibility of competing with him in the value of his gifts, Surtán would excel him in generosity if he stripped his tent and gave everything to Chárans, which Surtán immediately went and did.

† Personal visits, too, were paid to bards in favor. One on his death-bed, seeing the Rájá approach, exclaimed—

"Beyond the Sumér Mountain, beyond the utmost ocean, beyond the ten quarters, The stem of Rái Singh's fame has stretched through the nine climes."

stated that in the course of his lifetime he gave to Chárans, Bháts, and Bráhmans 25 villages, 2,000 elephants, 50,000 horses, three and a quarter karor of rupees in money, three *pusáo* of a karor each, and 100 of a lakh each. The term "*pusáo*" signifies (as already explained) that something deemed an equivalent, such as a child, a conquered territory or dignity, was given instead of the actual sum specified.

In Sambat 1635, Jodhpur fell into the hands of Rái Singh. The Kiyánt relates that the city was taken by the Rájá's distinguished brother, Rám Singh, from Chandar Sen, who, after his expulsion from Jodhpur (compare Tod, Vol. II, page 28, 1st Edition) established himself at Jálór, whence he contended with Rám Singh, who on one occasion took his standards and "*nagára*" or kettle-drum, and the "*chandar seni nagára*" is on occasions triumphantly beaten at Bíkánír to the present day. When fighting with Chandar Sen, Rám Singh accidentally killed his antagonist's *parohit* or family priest, and so grieved was he at the circumstance that he forthwith renounced for ever the use of arms. He substituted the excitement of political intrigue for that of war, and was murdered in Sambat 1656 by the Thákúr of Chúrú at the instigation of one of Rái Singh's Ránis. His brother, Pirthwí Ráj, soon avenged him by slaying his murderer.

Rám Singh seems to have been a typical Rájput noble, impetuous in action, and powerful in body. The very exaggerations show the reputation he bore: thus he is said to have killed the *parohit* before-mentioned, and his horse too, at a single blow, and in the Gújarát war to have severed the trunk of the king's elephant with a stroke.

Rái Singh is stated to have resided four years at Jodhpur, to which, on the representation of Ráo Ude Singh, the lawful ruler, he was induced eventually to behave generously. Ude Singh is said to have pointed out to him that he could scarcely hope permanently to retain Jodhpur, although he might succeed in causing its transfer to some race other than the Ráthor, which, since he (Rái Singh) was* head of the Ráthors, would be a result discreditable to him, and Ude Singh urged him rather to exert his influence with the Emperor to obtain sanction to the restoration of the ancient rulers of the country. According to the "Kiyánt", Rái Singh pressed the point so

heartily and successfully at Dehli that Ude Singh, in Sambat 1639, was re-established in his rights and created a Rájá. Rái Singh, however, retained the parganá of Nágór, which had been long detached from Jodhpur, and which, as related already, Rái Singh had taken from a Musalmán.†

From Sambat 1642 to Sambat 1649 Rái Singh was employed in the Dakhan, where he was Súbadár of Burhánpur. He is said to have kept the petty chiefs under control, and to have governed his province well; whilst at Burhánpur he planned and caused his minister, Karm Chand Bacháwat,

Present Fort of Bíkánír built to begin the present fine fort of Bíkánír on the site indicated by the omens in Bíká's time (*vide* page 7). The foundations were dug in Sambat 1645, and it was finished in

Sambat 1650, the year after the Rájá's return home from his *súbah*. In Sambat 1652, the Rájá is said to have discovered a conspiracy against his life, the prime mover in which was the aforesaid minister, Karm Chand, and, strange to say,

* It must be understood that these expressions are those of the writer of the Kiyánt.

† The possession by Rái Singh of Jodhpur is mentioned by Ferishta, Vol. II, pages 235-238 of Brigg's Translation, but not by Tod, who only speaks of his possession of Nágór and Mertia.

notwithstanding the Rájá's magnificent treatment of Bráhmans and the minstrel class, a *parohit*, a *Bhárat*, and a *Cháran* figure amongst the conspirators. Their object is said to have been to place the Rájá's eldest son, Dalpat, or his brother, Rám Singh, on the "*gadi*," Rám Singh and Karm Chand monopolizing the power of the state. Karm Chand and his family, having received timely warning, escaped to Dehli, where they were well received, and it is stated that they made the supreme authority acquainted with Bikanír secrets, an offence still held in native states to be one of the most heinous possible. But in other respects Karm Chand was now in a position to be a thorn in the side of the Rájá.*

* It may here be stated that tradition at Bikanír assigns a cause other than that above mentioned to the Rájá's animosity to Karm Chand, the bitterness of which and its tragical results the sequel will show. It is believed that Karm Chand, who was a good chess-player, attracted by his skill in that game the notice of the Emperor, who would often cause him to sit down and play whilst his master and other Rájás stood by in humble attendance on the Emperor. This was naturally most galling to Rái Singh, who conceived a hatred towards his servant, and who, after his return home, sought to kill him—a fate Karm Chand only escaped by flight to Dehli, as above related. This version of the story would account for the Emperor's kindly reception of the Bacháwat and the subsequent position of influence he seems to have occupied at Dehli.

The following anecdotes from the "*Kiyánt*" illustrate the character of Pirthwí Ráj, another, and the most distinguished, brother of Rái Singh, and are fair types of the stories, puerile as they may appear, of passion, reckless courage, spiritual power, and readiness in speech and rhyme in which Rájputs delight. He had a third brother, one Amar Singh, who, having been offended by the Emperor, became in Rájput fashion a "*babrotia*" or brigand, and collected together a band of 2,000 men, with whom he plundered the country. The Emperor sent a force under one Arab Khán to catch him, and treated lightly Pirthwí Ráj's emphatic declaration that Amrú would not be caught and that he would kill his pursuer. Pirthwí Ráj warned his brother that he was bound to verify his prophecy, and Amar Singh appealed to his followers to support him in maintaining his own and his brother's honor. The Dehli troops succeeded in surrounding the Rájputs in a village where their leader lay asleep after swallowing opium, and no one dare awake him, as he had an ugly habit of striking with his "*tahwar*" when so disturbed. Arrows and bullets were flying, but still Amrú slept on, till at length a Cháran girl, who having met with maltreatment from her husband lived with him, broke his slumbers with a song. The moment he woke, he said: "Lady, the army is here." He then gave opium to his men, sallied forth, charged and cut through the Dehli troops, and charged back on them. Arab Khán was on an elephant, upon which Amar Singh caused his steed to spring in the astonishing manner peculiar to native horses and represented in Mewár pictures of the great Rámá Partáp and his famous steed Chytak. (*Vide Tod*, Vol. I, page 338.) The animal had his feet on the elephant's tusks, and Amar Singh had one hand on the howdah, while with the other he had dealt Arab Khán a mortal blow, when a stroke from behind cut him in two. The first news which reached Dehli reported only the death of Amar Singh, and the Emperor sent for Pirthwí Ráj and said to him: "Give Amrú water." Pirthwí Ráj, however, confidently denounced the news as false, and soon another post brought word of Arab Khán's death, and told how Amar Singh's upper half lay with the former's corpse in the howdah. The Emperor in ecstacy of admiration exclaimed: "Alláh! well-done, Amrú! Ah Father! Amrú was a Hindu, a flying tiger! Bravo! You too, Pirthwí Ráj, who had such faith in your brother! Your pledge is good indeed!" To complete the romance, the lady who roused Amrú to action should have mounted his funeral pile as his wife did, but she preferred retiring to Bikanír.

Pirthwí Ráj made pilgrimages, and was so great a devotee that when he was at Agra he could tell the movements of Lakmi Nath's image (*murat*) at Bikanír. He likewise secured the favor of a powerful Cháran woman, who promised to succour him in need. When at Dehli he incurred the hostility of the ex-minister Karm Chand, who tempted the Emperor to send for Pirthwí Ráj's wife, according to the abominable custom of the Nauroza. Pirthwí Ráj in a song invoked the Cháran's aid, who promptly appeared to him in a vision, and Pirthwí Ráj addressed her in a couplet of verses. At that juncture, owing, it is said, to the Cháran woman's power, the Emperor abolished the disgraceful practice of the Nauroza, and Pirthwí Ráj's honor was saved. For more about Pirthwí Ráj and the Nauroza, and a different account of its abolition, *vide Tod*, 1st Edition, Vol. I, pages 343, 344, &c. Rái Singh, it would seem, did not escape the disgrace which his brother avoided.

A girl had been poisoned by a jealous lover, but though the poison was known to be good and sufficient, the girl somehow did not die. The circumstance attracted much attention, and none could solve the mystery. At length, Pirthwí Ráj explained that the girl was kept alive by the intensity of her passion for some man, and that death would follow her union with him. The experiment was tried, and Pirthwí Ráj proved to be right.

In Sambat 1654, Rái Singh went to Bhatnér, which had been twenty years consecutively in the possession of Bikánir; whilst he was there, a father-in-law of the Emperor, one Nasir Khán, happened to pass through. Whilst halting in the town, Nasir Khán outraged a Khatri's daughter, and the Mahárájá, though made aware of the fact, did not venture openly to punish him; however, he gave a hint to the official deputed to wait on Nasir Khán and to see he obtained supplies. This man, one Tejá Bagor, when Nasir Khán was blustering about and abusing him and others because the supplies were not to his mind, pretended to lose his temper, and gave Nasir Khán and

Bhatnér taken from Rái Singh
and given to his son.

all his party a shoe-beating. Although the Rájá himself went to apologize to the Musalmán, and made a show of dismissing Tejá, Nasir Khán

would not be appeased, but went to Dehli, took counsel with Karm Chand and others, and complained to the Emperor, who demanded the surrender of Tejá—a demand with which Rái Singh refused to comply. The Rájá's son, Dalpat, consequently received the grant of Bhatnér, which he not only occupied, but also attacked Bikánir and defeated the Rájá, who had to go as a suppliant to Dehli. Dalpat himself was after a while expelled from Bhatnér by a force from Dehli brought on him by his enemies, the Bhatís and Johyás, and returned eventually to Bikánir, but apparently soon recovered Bhatnér.

In Sambat 1661 the Emperor Akbar died. A Bikánir poet wrote on the event: "*In a moment his treasure is another's; Naked has gone Akbar Shah Jalál.*"

Death of Akbar.

On the accession of Jahángir, Rái Singh went to Dehli, where his old

Rái Singh goes to do homage
to the new Emperor.

minister, Karm Chand, then lay dying. The Rájá visited him, was apparently affected, and shed tears so that Karm Chand's sons remarked that after all the Rájá must have loved their father. But Karm Chand saw deeper, and told his sons that the Rájá only wept because he saw him dying undisgraced, and he warned them never to go to Bikánir. After his death the Mahárájá paid a visit of condolence to the family, and treated the sons with distinction.

It may be properly mentioned here, in connection with Bikánir ministers, that Rájá Rái Singh introduced two new officials, whose descendants to the present day retain high or respectable positions in Bikánir. One was Tiloksi, a Tosmi wal maháján, who came from Nágor to arrange the Rájá's establishments, which, though shorn of their grandeur, retain to some extent in the present day the organization then

Rái Singh's officials.

One day the Emperor said to Pirthwi Ráj: "You have saints (*pir*) in your power; can you foretell the date of your own death?" Pirthwi Ráj replied: "Yes, I know I shall die in six months' time at the Bistránt Ghát at Mathura, where a white crow (*kag*, probably *Karníji*) will appear." That day the Emperor sent Pirthwi Ráj to Attúk, where he remained on service. Five months of the six which remained to Pirthwi Ráj had elapsed, when the Emperor and his courtiers in want of some diversion to while away the time observed a Bhl with a cage containing a pair of bráhmíni ducks (*chakwa chakwi*), which, having caught in the Jamna the day before, he had put into the cage for the night and had brought to sell in the city. The *chakwa* and the *chakwi* are said to be compelled by fate to remain apart at night, when they sit on opposite sides of a stream and call plaintively to one another; so the Emperor remarked that the Bhl, their foe, had been worth ten million friends to them by bringing them together. A courtier present, after the fashion of the time, attempted to put the Emperor's pleasantry into verse, but he could only make the first line of the couplet, nor could any one else complete it to the Emperor's taste. Some one suggested that Pirthwi Ráj, whose skill in versification was well known, would, if present, have completed the rhyme; whereupon the Emperor, with the caprice which is often characteristic of a despot, at once ordered Pirthwi Ráj to be summoned from the frontier post where he had been sent that his prophecy might be falsified. On the very day on which he had foretold that his death would occur he reached Mathura, where, having finished and sent the couplet to the Emperor, he died as he had foretold, in the odour of Hindu sanctity.

It was a year before his own death that he avenged Rám Singh, as above related. The poem he wrote on his brother and other of his verses are preserved.

introduced, and are spoken of as the thirty-six establishments (*chattis karkāhne*). The title of "*Kotāri*" is still borne by the descendants of Tiloksi. The other was Karmśī. a Rakhecha, who came over with the Rājā's Jaisalmir bride, and whose descendant, Mān Mal, is now one of the most influential officials in Bikanir, and has often been *dwān*.

Immediately after the death of Karm Chand, Rāi Singh was again appointed to the Subāh of Burhānpur, where, after a visit to Bikanir, he set off with his son Sūr Singh, and he governed there successfully for seven years.

In Sambat 1668 he fell ill, and Sūr Singh, seeing that his father's end was approaching, with folded hands asked for his last injunctions. These were

Last injunctions of Rāi Singh that the Bachāwats, the family of Karm Chand, should be enticed to Bikanir, that on them should be visited the sins of their father, and that *Parohit* Mān Mahes and *Bāhrat* Chotji, and the other conspirators associated with

His death. Karm Chand, should receive the reward of their misdeeds. Having exacted a promise that his wishes should be attended to, the Rājā expired Sambat 1668. Three *Rānis* and three "*pātrs*" were burnt with him.

Raja Rāi Singh had four sons—(1) Dalpat Singh, (2) Sūr Singh, (3) Kishen Singh, (4) Bhopat Singh, who died immediately after his marriage to a Pūgal lady, who became *sati*, and in whose honor a fair called the "*dasmi*" (held on the 10th of the month) still takes place.

In A. D. 1570 a sister of Rāi Singh was married to the Emperor Akbar, and in A. D. 1586 a daughter was married to Prince Sīlim, who afterwards became the Emperor Jahāngir.

Neither event is alluded to in the "*Kiyānt*," but the facts are recorded by Ferishtā (pages 234 and 260, Brigg's Translation). For Professor Blochmann's account of Rāi Singh and his immediate successors with comments thereon, see Appendix.

Dalpat Singh.

Dalpat Singh, who took his seat on the Bikanir "*gadi*" Sambat 1668, was born in Sambat 1621. On his accession he went to do homage to the Emperor at Dehli, where he remained in attendance at the court for a year. He then returned to Bikanir apparently without leave, for he was summoned back, and, as he did not obey, incurred the imperial displeasure.

The year after he became Rājā he likewise excited the ill-will of some of his Bhātī nobles, by beginning a fort in the desert at a place called Chundehr (near the present Anupgarh), intended to keep them in stricter subjection. It was not finished, for the Bhātī Thakur of Khārbara came with 3,000 men and filled in the foundations as soon as they were dug.

The Rājā continued to make enemies. His brother, Sūr Singh, held Philodi with eighty-four villages, and Dalpat Singh, with the concurrence of his favorite, the alleged conspirator Parohit Mān Mahes, resolved to resume these eighty-four villages, leaving Sūr Singh only Philodi. The *dwān* pointed out to Dalpat Singh that it was improper to confiscate grants made by his father and to impoverish his brother; but under Mān Mahes's influence the Rājā persisted, and Sūr Singh was deprived of his lands. He came to

Bikánir, accompanied by his vassals (*jilla*), and visited the *parohit*, whose servants kept him waiting—a common source of offence—till the *parohit*, who had eaten opium, awoke from his sleep. At length the *parohit* came out, but, in answer to Súr Singh's application for his lands, said that such petitions were useless, as the Mahárájá at present had no intention of restoring the lands.

Súr Singh, by the advice of his people, abstained from at once raising an insurrection, but he sent an agent to Dehli, and, after remaining two months at Bikánir, solicited permission for his mother to go to the Sarambhji Ghát on the Ganges. The Rájá readily assented, and, as Súr Singh had anticipated, suggested that he should accompany her. Visiting his brother-in-law, the famous Rájá Mán Singh, at Sanganer *en route*, Súr Singh proceeded to Sarambhji, where he received a summons to Dehli,

Súr Singh goes to the Emperor and gets grant of Bikánir.

Bikánir invaded by an imperial force.

Dalpat Singh defeats it at Chápar.

procured no doubt by his agent. There the Emperor granted to him Bikánir, and sent 50,000 men under Nawáb Zabdi Khán to put him in possession. But Dalpat Singh defeated it at Chápar; and even when Zabdi Khán was largely reinforced,

he dared not again face Dalpat Singh; so great was his prowess. It was, however, resolved to try intrigue, and such was Dalpat Singh's unpopularity that his nobles of every class fell away from him, and openly or secretly united with Súr Singh. The Thakur of Khárbára, already mentioned as strong enough to defy the Rájá, held back, but at length on Súr Singh's marrying his daughter he joined him. But one official of note seems to have acted loyally, and that was Thákur Sí the Bed, an old Baniá servant of the state, who had been *diwan* in Rái Singh's time, and at this period was Governor of Bhatnér, with 242 villages and 3,000 fighting-men under his control. To Súr Singh's

Is taken prisoner by treachery.

invitation he replied that he was the servant of him who occupied the "*gadi*" and by him would he stand: why should Súr Singh, now that so many had oined him, strive to induce but one more. Surrounded by his treacherous *sardárs*, Dalpat Singh had gone forth to battle, when the Thákur of Chúrú, who was sitting as "*Khawás*" or attendant in the howdah behind him, seized

Is confined at Ajmír.

him and made him over to a party which conveyed him to Hissár, whence he was sent to Ajmír and imprisoned. He had been there for four months, guarded by 100 men, when accidentally Thákur Háthi Singh, Champáwat of Márwár, halted at Ajmír on his way to visit his wife's family. The Rájá, seeing his camp,

Champáwat of Márwár de- sent to enquire whose it was, whereupon the votes himself and followers in Thákur sent a *chobdar* to the Rájá with a polite attempting his release.

message. The Rájá expressed a desire to see the Thákur, but the latter replied that the interview should take place on his return journey. "Yes," groaned the Rájá, "he a free man is going to see his relations; why should he trouble himself about a wretched prisoner?" This taunt roused the Rájput spirit in Háthi Singh, who well knew what the imprisoned chief wanted of him, and, talking with his followers, he thus reasoned: "We are all subject to repeated births and deaths (individual existence is a poor thing), and to die on a great occasion gives permanent fame (which is a grand thing)." The others replied: "Yes, and this is a great occasion, for, through the faithlessness of many Ráthors, this Ráthor Rájá is confined. Than to fall with him a worthier death could not be found, and though we have not lands in Bikánir we too are Ráthors, and honor this chief as our own. Let him not die a prisoner." They then all resolved to rescue the Rájá or perish; and, when the Thákur

sought to dissuade some of his people from joining in the almost hopeless effort, they asked how they could die better (" *mháne aiso parab bale kathe mile*"), and why should they avoid such a glorious death? Were not they, too, Rájput? The 11th of Phágan Budí was the date fixed for the event, which the Ráthors prepared for by dyeing their clothes with the fatal saffron. The curious were told that they were preparing for nuptials. On the morning of the 11th, alms (*dán-pán*) having been distributed, Háthi Singh's party, consisting of 400 men, half foot, half horse, attacked and killed the guard over Dalpat Singh, whom they saluted and released. They were, however, soon surrounded by the Súbadár of Ajmír with 4,000 men, and escape became impossible. The women were then slaughtered and the death sally made, in which none escaped. Eight days afterwards the news reached Bhatnér, where,

Dalpat Singh and the whole party killed.

Satis.

as the safest place in his territory, Dalpat Singh had sent six of his wives. All of these became *sati* with the turban of the Rájá at Bhatnér, where a monument with their hands carved on it still bears witness to the fact;* while to the present day, in memory of Háthi Singh's devotion, Champáwats have the privilege of approaching on horse back the Háthi Pol gate of the Bikánir Fort while others are compelled to dismount at a distance.

Súr Singh.

Súr Singh, who was born in Sambat 1651, took his seat on the Bikánir

Accession of Súr Singh.

"*gadi*" in Mangsar, Sambat 1670 (A.D. 1613), and as usual went to Dehli to do homage. When there, he paid a visit to the family of the late minister, Karam Chand Bacháwat, whose hesitation to return to Bikánir he successfully exerted himself to remove by a solemn guarantee (*dharam karam*). He went so far as to dismiss his *diwan*, in order to give the office to Lakhmi Chand and Bágh Chand, the sons of Karm Chand.

Destruction of Bacháwats.

The Bacháwats thereupon re-settled in Bikánir, but two months had hardly elapsed when one morning at daybreak their quarters were surrounded by 4,000 Bikánir troops, and they soon perceived that their entire destruction was intended. Though they belonged to one of the *bania* castes, they had, like many of their class who live amongst, and hold office under Rájputs, imbibed much of the Rájput spirit, and they resolved to die hard. They were supported by 500 Rájputs in their employ. So, after grinding up their jewels and killing their women, they rushed forth upon the troops, many of whom they slew; but at length the whole of them were killed, their houses were destroyed, and the spot is now inhabited by Bojaks (Jain temple sweepers) and Jattis. None other are allowed to live on it. However, the Rájá did not succeed in exterminating the Bacháwats, of whom one boy happened to be absent with his mother's

Further punishment of family, and his descendants are now in Udepúr. In conspirators against his the same year that the slaughter of the Bacháwats father.

occurred, Súr Singh further carried out the dying behest of his father by confiscating the lands of the conspirators, *Parohit* Mán Mahes and *Bhárat* Ohotoji. They both came to Bikánir to sit "*dharna*" on the Rájá; but, finding their attempts to intimidate unavailing they erected a funeral pile on the present site of the village Dingli and burnt themselves to death. The "*Parohitpand*" and "*Bháratpand*," i.e., the offices of priest and minstrel respectively, were thenceforth lost to their families, and the right

* General Cunningham tells me that he has seen the monument at Bhatnér.

to the horse or elephant (*toran ghorá, háthi*), used by the bridegroom in approaching the bride's residence at Ráj marriages, was conferred on a *Bhārat* of village Chāndasar. Another of those denounced by the late Rájá, Burta Ját, was also killed, a *Bidāwat Thākur* being the instrument.

I here omit the contents of some pages of the "*Kiyánt*," which give a long account of the part the *Gor Rájpúts* of Ajmír played in the wars of the period, particularly in those which ended with the enthronement of Prince Khúrram under the name of Sháhjahán, after the death of the Emperor Jahángir. It is sufficient to state that during the whole reign of Jahángir, Súr Singh is said to have retained the imperial favor. A *mansab* was conferred on him, but he does not seem to have held so much territory as his

Extent of Bikanír territory at this time.

father, for the state consisted of but thirteen Parganáas. These, however, comprised the present Jodhpur Parganáas of Nágor and Philodí to the south of Bikanír, while to the north and north-east most of the territory of Sírśá and Hānsi was under the sway of the Rájá. Indeed, at one time Ude Bhán, Thākur of Mahájan, levied taxes from the Johyás on the births and grazing of cattle up to the banks of the Satlaj.

Súr Singh, though he allowed one bard to burn himself before his eyes, did not neglect the poets. When one, Choluji by name, presented to him a work called the "*Belgranth*," or, "The Book of the Clinging Creeper," the Rájá bestowed on him village Dandusá and six others, besides a lakh "*pusáo*." But this grant and another of three villages are the only ones recorded, so that Súr Singh could have been no imitator of his father's extravagance. The Rájá was successful in keeping in check the disaffected. He caused Tejmal, the dangerous Bháti Thākur of Kárbhara, to be murdered by treachery, but he raised to the rank of Ráwal another Bháti Thākur, Sain Dás of Jaimalsar.

A circumstance occurred in Súr Singh's time, which to the present day affects the marriage relations of Bikanír. A niece of Súr Singh had been married to Ráwal Bhim of Jaisalmír. Shortly after the death of the Ráwal, which occurred when Súr Singh was at Bikanír, the latter received an urgent message from his niece, begging him to come with a force at once in order to save the life of her son, whom the Bhátis wished to kill; and before Súr Singh could reach Jaisalmír, news of the murder of his grand-nephew arrived. The Rájá then swore that no Bikanír Chief's daughter should again go to Jaisalmír, an oath which has been held binding by his successors and still has force.

Rájá Súr Singh died at village Bhari, when on service in the Dakhan, Sambat 1688. His *satis* were but four in number, two *Ránis*, one *pátr* and one *bandáran* (a concubine of the second rank), and a slave-girl.

Death of Sur Singh in the Dakhan.

His sons were three in number, Karan Singh, Satr Sál, and Arjun Singh.

Karan Singh.

Karan Singh, who was a great grandson of the famous Rájá Mán Singh of Amer, was born in Sambat 1663. He succeeded his father, Rájá Súr Singh, in Sambat 1688 (A.D. 1631).

The Rájá as usual went to Dehli to do homage and get his father's "*Mansab*" renewed. But he does not seem to have prospered there much, as the parganá of Nágor, a few years after his accession, was taken from him and conferred on Amar Singh, an uncle of the reigning Rájá of Jodhpur, from which

Loses Nágor.

he had been expelled. The cause of his expulsion is curious, as illustrating the wide difference between the habits of the Rájputs of Rájputáná and the habits

Anecdote illustrating difference between habits of those who dwell beyond its limits. The daughter of Gaj Singh, Rájá of Jodhpur and brother of Amar Rájputáná Rájputs and Singh, had been married at Banáres to a prince of those elsewhere.

Ríwá, a Bhágelá Rájput, who came to Jodhpur to take away his bride. One day Amar Singh, returning from hunting, was passing at dinner time the Ríwá encampment, and was invited to dinner by the prince. Amar Singh and his party, according to the custom of Rájputáná, sat down in a row, without further preparation than stretching a cloth (*panthá*) to sit upon, and waited for their dinner to be handed to them by men of the barber caste (*nádis*). This excited the ridicule of the Bhágelás, and the prince asked Amar Singh what kind of *Kshatri* is he who does not consecrate a space (*choká*) to eat in, and who does not wear a "*janeó*" or sacred thread, which is never dispensed with by individuals of the highest castes of the east and south, but often discarded by the Rájputs of Rájputáná. The result of the Bhágelás' banter was tragical, for Amar Singh flew into a passion, drew his "*tálwar*," and killed the Ríwá prince, whose wife became a "*sati*" instead of going to Ríwá, and Amar Singh was banished from Jodhpur, whence he, as the manner was, went to seek favour at Dehli. For curious details of the ceremony of "*Deshwatah*" or banishing, *vide* Tod's Vol. II, page 44 of 1st Edition.

The grant to Amar Singh of Nágór caused bad blood between him and Rájá Karan Singh, more especially because he took possession of village Lakhania belonging to Bikánir Proper, but which he claimed as part of Nágór. Karan Singh, with the sanction of the Emperor, succeeded in ousting him from Lakhania, and the matter being so settled, peace was maintained between the two disputants by their enforced detention at Dehli.

In Sambat 1701, Rájá Karan Singh was sent to the Dakhan to repress a petty rebel, whose town, Jowári, was granted to him. Karan Singh sent to the Dakhan. Having successfully accomplished his mission, Karan Singh returned to Bikánir in Sambat 1704.

After the Rájá's return, his vassal Sadá Sen, Ráo of Púgal, rebelled, and after a siege of a month Púgal was taken by the Mahárájá. Notwithstanding its uninviting situation in the wild wastes between the city of Bikánir and Múltán, Púgal had been a place of note. The Bhátis acquired it from the Ponwars in Sambat 915. Even then it was the chief of 200 villages, which in Karan Singh's time had grown to 561. The descendants of Shekhá, Bika's father-in-law, now claimed the division of the estate, which was accordingly partitioned amongst the representatives of the three sons of Shekhá. The descendant of his eldest son, Haro, obtained Púgal and 252 villages. Two descendants of a second son, Kewan, obtained the one Bikampur with 84 villages, the other Birsálpur with 41 villages, while a fourth, the descendant of Bagoji, received Ráimalwáli with 184 villages.*

In the struggle between the sons of Sháhjahán for the imperial throne, the Bikánir Chief threw in his lot with the fortunate Aurangzib. Two of his four gallant sons, warriors as brave as any who have sprung from the Ráthor stock, were present in the principal battles for the crown, and it is said that in more than one they led the van. In the last fight with Prince Dará they particularly distinguished themselves,

*The names of the four *sardárs* were Ráo Ganesh Dás of Púgal, Ráo Dayal Dás of Birsálpur, Thákur Sár Singh of Bhikampur, and Thákur Askaran of Ráimalwáli.

in appreciation of which the emperor with his own handkerchief brushed off the dust from their persons as they stood before him hot from the battle. This distinction is spoken of in the "Kiyánt" as conferred both by Rájput chiefs as well as by emperors, and it seems to be looked upon as a very great honor.

An incident occurred in Rájá Karan Singh's time which is well known throughout Rájputáná, and has been much the subject of poem and song. The Kiyánt relates that the Attempt of Aurangzeb to convert the chiefs of Rajis- than.

Aurangzeb contemplated the conversion to Islámism of the Rájput chiefs. It tells how the emperor destroyed the gods of Banáras,—how the Deo Bashasha, refusing to be destroyed, jumped into a well, leaving the site of his temple to be converted into that of the present striking mosque of the city; how the temples of Brindában and other places were likewise levelled; how Amer gave refuge to one god, the famous Kesava, which was subsequently transferred to Mewár, where the Ráná generously devoted the heads of a lákh of Sesodiás for his defence*, and how after all this the Rájás joined the imperial army ostensibly for a campaign beyond the Indus. By the time the army had reached Attúk, Rájá Karan Singh discovered, with the assistance of a friendly Saiyad in his service, that the emperor intended to convert all the Hindús by force after they had crossed the Indus. The Rájás took counsel regarding the course to be pursued, and it was agreed to act so as to cause the Musalmáns to insist on their right of precedence in crossing the river, which the Hindús would thus be enabled to place between themselves and their enemies. Accordingly the Rájás sent their "harkárás" (messengers) to take possession of the thousands of boats collected for the passage of the army. As had been foreseen the Musalmáns resented this movement as an impertinence, and the Hindú harkárás were driven away, the Musalmáns declaring they would use the boats first. Just as the latter, containing the Muhammadan portion of the host, had crossed the river, news arrived of the death of the Rájá of Amer's mother, and on this pretext all the Rájás delayed their crossing for twelve days, during which the next step they were to take was anxiously

The Rájás avert the danger. discussed. It was evident to them that if they left the means of instantly recrossing the river in the hands of the emperor, they would, if they turned their faces homewards, be immediately attacked in their rear by the superior Musalmán force, and that at least they would not escape without severe loss. At length the Rájás came in a body to Karan Singh, and pointed out to him that, since his territories were the least susceptible of invasion, he could, with comparatively little danger to himself, save their religion, and bear the brunt of the imperial

The Rájá of Bikánír saluted as the Jungle Emperor. displeasure by beginning the destruction of the boats. Karan Singh assented, but not without a condition. Seated on his "gadi" he was for once to receive the

He leads the resistance.

homage of the assembled Rájás as Emperor of Hindustan (or, as another account says, as the Jungle Emperor)†, and to this the Rájput chiefs agreed. The Bikánírís then set to work to destroy the boats in the presence of the "ahadi" or imperial messenger attached to the darbár. The guilt of leading the league being thus laid upon the shoulders of Karan Singh, the other Rájás struck in, all the boats were soon useless, and the Rájputs set off securely on their way home. Karan Singh did not fail to reward the Saiyad through whose timely warning the threatened calamity was averted. He received a grant of a pakka pice on every house in Bikánír and village Pankhawálá rent-free. It may be here mentioned that for many

* Mentioned also by Tod, Vol. I, page 528.

† "Jungales" was one of the titles of the Chohan Kings of Delhi, Tod, Vol. II, page 421, 2nd Edition.

generations there have been a class of Saiyads employed in the Bikanir forces who have furnished many faithful soldiers to the darbar.

The emperor returned to Dehli naturally angry with the Bikanir chief, and an army was ordered against him. In the strug-

The Rájá threatened with the emperor's vengeance. gle Karan Singh, after the manner of his ancestors,

Applies to Karniji for help. applied to Karniji for help. He proceeded to Deshnúk, and before the image of the goddess sung a hymn (chirja) of his own composition, praying for protection from the Mughals. This "chirja" is still sung at Deshnúk on nights of watching (ráti jaga).

The emperor summons The Rájá's piety had the desired effect. The army, him to Dehli. which had advanced one march against Bikanir, was recalled, and the Maharájá summoned to Dehli by an "ahadi" or messenger.*

The Rájá took anxious counsel with his people as to whether the summons should be obeyed. One party said: "Go, we cannot be convicted of disloyalty;" but the principal ministers deprecated the Rájá's going, and suggested that his eldest son, Anúp Singh, should go in his place. Karan Singh replied that, though he knew the emperor would never forgive him, yet he had confidence in Karniji; that it was best for him to go, for, if there was to be treachery, it would probably be in the King's presence, and there would be a grand opportunity of showing him and others how he and his could die. Leaving Anúp Singh at Bikanir, the Maharájá sent his two most distinguished sons, Kesri Singh and Padam Singh, before him to Dehli. At this juncture Banmáli

Treachery of a natural son of the Rájá.

Dás, a natural son (khawáswál) of the Rájá, volunteered to become a Muhammadan if the Bikanir mansab was bestowed on him. The emperor, it is stated, assented, and resolved to have Karan Singh murdered in darbar after arrival at Dehli. The plot had matured, the assassins were appointed, but all was frustrated by the formidable appearance of the famous Kesri Singh and Padam Singh as they sat beside their father in darbar. The emperor

The Rájá goes to Dehli made a sign to the assassins, only too glad to obey and defeats the plot against him, not to act; and as the Bikanir party were leaving, his life.

he praised the chiefs' two gallant sons, especially alluding to the conduct of Kesri Singh in the last great battle with Dára, conduct which, said the emperor, saved his life. Karan Singh replied with much tact that the victory was no doubt due to the piety of the emperor, who read the Korán through the heat of the struggle. Aurangzeb finally resolved to use the Bikaniris instead of murdering them, so Karan

The Rájá sent to the Dakhan, where he dies.

Singh was sent to Aurangábád in the Dakhan, where he held a grant of the betel (pán) garden, round a village called Karanpúra, no doubt established by himself. Karan Singh never returned from Aurangábád. The year of his death is not specified, but it is told that just before he died he sent a message to Anúp Singh, urging him to be on his guard against the traitor Banmáli Dás. At Karanpúra he built a temple of Karniji, which is still maintained from the Bikanir treasury, and copies of the betel-growers' (panwáris) sanads or grants are still preserved in the Bikanir records. Karan Singh gave but two or three villages in

*A functionary well known in Bikanir, where they were often unwelcome guests. In the time of one Rájá it is said that the ahadis, from the time they entered Bikanir, obtained nothing but brackish water to drink, and found their tents incessantly full of that "torment of travellers" in the sandy tracts—the spiked brist of the bharát grass. When they begged that better arrangements for their comfort might be made, they were met with the reply: "Such is Bikanir, and such the hardships those who live in it must endure;" so that the ahadis took care that their residence therein was no longer than they could help. The ahadis were gentlemen troopers directly under the Emperor's orders, and were employed on various special duties, see Blochmann's translation of the Ain Akbari.

religious grant. Eight Rānīs and eleven khawāsēs (concubines of the highest rank) became satī after his death. He had eight sons: (1) Anūp Singh, (2) Kesri Singh, (3) Padam Singh, (4) Mohan Singh, (5) Debi Singh, (6) Madan Singh, Ajab Singh and (8) Amar Singh.

Anūp Singh.

Though the date of Karan Singh's death is not specified in the proper place in the "Kiyānt," it appears from a subsequent casual remark that the year was Sambat 1726 (A.D. 1669).

Thākūr Kushāl Singh of Chūrū alone of the Bīkānīr sardārs was present with the Rājā at his death; the rest had left him to wait upon his son, Anūp Singh, at Bīkānīr. After Khushāl Singh had performed the sacred duties of the funeral, and conveyed the Mahārājā's ashes to the Ganges, he returned to Bīkānīr, where his presence caused much uneasiness among the time-servers who surrounded Anūp Singh.

The latter frankly acknowledged his devotion, saying: "You are indeed the true son of the late Mahārājā; I am only the grant of Bīkānīr, which, his son in name." Anūp Singh did not immediately succeed to the "gadi." For a time the Bīkānīr mansab was conferred on no one. At length through, it is said, the exertions of some of the old Baniā officials, who went to Dehli and bribed the Wazīr, the state was granted to Anūp Singh. But shortly afterwards it was capriciously transferred to Banmālī Dās, the apostate. Anūp Singh, however, went to Dehli and succeeded in recovering his state, which was attached to a mansab of Rs. 3,000. The territories at this time consisted of the following parganās, which, however, apparently do not include the territory around the city:—

(1) Sīrsā, (2) Toshām, (3) Fātiābād, (4) Rāto (5) Bhatnēr, (6) Sīwānī, (7) Atkheri, (8) Sīūran, (9) Mem, (10) Ahawo, (11) Malot, (12) Philodī, (13) Agroha, and (14) Bhitandā. For an account of most of these parganās, see Gazetteers of Hissār and Sīrsā, where they are now chiefly situated, and the greater part of which they comprise.

Besides the above he held in the Dakhan the parganās of Sajawalpur, Nasro, and Rakhāwat.

On obtaining the mansab Anūp Singh was sent to the Dakhan, where he Anūp Singh sent to the Dak had to contend with the chief of Rājgarh. han.

In the fight with the rebel it is remarkable that a Kotāri, i.e., an hereditary Baniā official, led the van, while another of the same class was the only person of note recorded as killed. One thākūr, Kharak Singh of Bukharko, is mentioned as having distinguished himself. Anūp Singh likewise took a prominent part in the capture of Golcondā, and for his services was, according to the Kiyānt, made a Mahārājā. After a short interval at home, during which he contracted two marriages, Anūp Singh was again sent to the Dakhan, this time to Adūnī, a name still well known in Bīkānīr as connected with the glory of its fighting-men. An important event in the Bīkānīr State occurred whilst the Mahārājā was at Adūnī. The Bhātī thākurs of Khārbarā Rāmālwalī Bhātīs aided by and Rāmālwalī rebelled, and a hereditary Baniā Jōhyās, named Mukund Rāi, volunteered to undertake their reduction. The Mahārājā provided him with letters to all

Men of the Baniā caste distinguish themselves in the struggle there.

Anūp Singh present at the taking of Golcondā.

He is made a Mahārājā.

Rebellion of Khārbarā and was at Adūnī. The Bhātī thākurs of Khārbarā Rāmālwalī Bhātīs aided by and Rāmālwalī rebelled, and a hereditary Baniā Jōhyās, named Mukund Rāi, volunteered to undertake their reduction. The Mahārājā provided him with letters to all

officials in Bikánir believed to have funds at command, and sent him to Bikánir, where he succeeded in raising a force of four thousand men. One Bháti, Bhág Chánd, a great grandson of Tejmál so famous in Rájá Rái Singh's time, supported the darbár. The Bhátis to the number of two thousand were assembled in the fort of Churaia. It was situated about one hundred miles north of Bikánir, and the Rájputs, who are fond of defining regions by some characteristic natural product, spoke of it as beyond the region of the "phog". It was in this locality that Rájá Rái Singh wished to erect a

Mukúnd Rái's expedition against them. fort, but was baffled by Tejmál Bháti. The place was besieged by Mukúnd Rái's force, whereupon the

Bhátis called in the aid of the Johyás, so frequently a thorn in the side of Bikánir. The Johyás attempted to throw supplies into the fort but failed, and the Bháti leaders then began to treat with Mukúnd Rái. They reminded Mukúnd Rái of Rájá Rái Singh's failure to establish a fort, and how Tejmál had said: "Where the phog grows the land is yours, but where the sájl and láí grow it is mine;" and they pointed out that the lands on the banks of the Hakro had often changed hands; Hamírde Dasodá had once held them, then the Johyás, afterwards one Jáí Singh, then for a time the Khinchí Rájputs, after them the Kailán Rájputs, and then the Bhátis; but Ráthors had never possessed them, and had no valid claim to them. Meanwhile the Bhátis in the fort were starving, and on Mukúnd Rái and his principal lieutenant, Amar Singh Sringot, swearing that they would be safe, the Bháti leaders, Jagrúp Singh and Bihári Das, came to discuss matters in the Ráthor camp. After a long debate the Bháti "peshkash" to be paid to the Bikánir darbár was fixed at a lákh, and it was promised that the ráj troops should be removed. During the negotiations Mukúnd Rái's enemies in Bikánir sent word by letter to the Bhátis that Mukúnd Rái meditated treachery, and if the Bhátis could manage to kill him the writers would avert the displeasure of the Bikánir darbár. Bihári Dás, however, did not accept the warning: he had exchanged "pagris" with Mukúnd Rái, and he now showed him the letter. In five days Rs. 50,000 of the stipulated "peshkash" had been paid, and as Mukúnd Rái said he would get the rest excused, unbounded confidence dwelt in the minds of the thákurs. To diminish expenses the Bhátis sent away the Johyás and reduced their garrison to five hundred men. Mukúnd Rái and Amar Singh now saw that if their oaths were disregarded, the object of their desire could be obtained. Discussing the matter

Treacherous destruction of the Bhátis.

the garrison, killed Jagrúp

Fort of Anúgarh built.

together they decided that "loyal service must be sinless" ("siám kám nirdosh hai"). Accordingly they attacked the fort at midnight, surprised Singh and Behári Dás, and took the fort. On its site in Sambat 1735 a larger fort was built named "Anúgarh" which is now looked upon as one of the principal strongholds of Bikánir. The Mahárájá at Adúni was greatly pleased with this success, and handsome rewards were conferred on Mukúnd Rái and Amar Singh. Bhág Chand Bháti, mentioned above as loyal to the Darbár, received the grant of Khárbará, which estate is still held by his descendants. The immediate result of the grant

Continued contests with the Bhátis.

son of the slaughtered Behári Dás, supported by the Johyás, who took Khárbará and laid waste all the northern border. Whereupon the Thákur of Mahájan, whose estate adjoined Khárbará, represented that if Khárbará were given to him, he would extend the boundaries of Bikánir to the banks of the Satlaj. He obtained the grant,

whereupon the son of the late grantee, Bhág Chand, attacked Khárbará, supported by the Johyás. The Mahájan thákur was killed, and his heir fell into the hands of the Johyás. As he was but a

Punishment of the Johyás, child they released him, and he subsequently avenged his father by slaying a number of Johyás in their own country; but when that took place Faríd Khán, leader of the attack on Khárbará, was dead, and all that the young thákur could do against him was to strike his tomb with his sword; the mark of the blow long remained, and it is said that from that date the Johyás did homage and paid taxes to Bíkánir, though often rebellious. Indeed, within a year or two the Johyá

Bhátís join the Johyás. chief of Hissár attacked Sísá held by the Thákur of Bukharko, who with others was killed, and for the time the parganá lost to Bíkánir. One Hyát Khán, Bhátí, who had charge of Bhatnér on the part of the darbár, joined the Johyás, and for a short season made himself independent in Bhatnér. It should be noticed that Hyát Khán's position at Bhatnér was due to Maharájá Anúp Singh's

Bhatnér for a time lost to suspicions of his own thákurs, whom he believed to be favorable to his brother, Padam Singh; and the darbár. Padam Singh had disregarded his authority, and

it was thought aspired to the "gadi".

The Maharájá was learned in Sanscrit and valued literature. When the Maharájá's literary tastes. Bráhmans were concealing their books and often destroying them from fear of the intolerant emperor, Anúp Singh bought a number, and they or their dust are still in the library of the Bíkánir fort. Two works, the "Anúp Raka" and the "Anúp Meghmálá," were written in Sanscrit in honor of the Maharájá, who seems, by the villages he gave to Chárans and the mode in which they speak of him, to have almost revived the golden days of Rái Singh.

Banmáli Dás, before mentioned as an illegitimate son of Karam Singh and as having intrigued to obtain the mansab of Bíkánir, was still pressing his suit at Dehli, where he was on intimate terms with the Saiyad Hasan Ali,

Banmáli Dás, the traitor, gets who, having acquired great influence over the emperor, obtained for Banmáli Dás half the Bíkánir mansab; so Banmáli Dás, came to Bíkánir with three thousand men and encamped near the old fort of Bíká. The Maharájá entertained him handsomely, but Banmáli Dás, who, as before mentioned, had become a Musalmán, slaughtered goats and sheep near the temple of Lakhmí

Nárain, and when remonstrated with declared he would kill cows there if he liked. He then sent for the accountants and demanded their ledgers

Banmáli Dás comes to Bíkánir. in order that he might determine what villages to take. As they were unable to give up the ledgers, he kept them prisoners. However, a clever Ahir, named Ude Rám, volunteered to help the Maharájá out of his difficulties. Going to Banmáli Dás he told him that he would not find out the good villages by keeping the accountants, but that he himself was ready to give him all the information he required; and on Banmáli Dás

Settles at Chingoi. resolving to have his fort at Chingoi Ude Rám obtained from the Maharájá an order (rúka) placing him in possession of Changoi and half the other towns and villages of Bíkánir. It so happened that the Maharájá had married the daughter of a poor thákur named Lakhmí Dás Sonagri, who having nothing to give in dowry had once told the Maharájá that he was ready, as an equivalent, to perform any service which might be required. The Maharájá now sent for him, and, reminding him of his promise,

desired him to kill Banmáli Dás. The thákur protested against being required to shed the blood of a son of the late Mahárájá Karan Singh, and when pressed, stipulated that at least some one else should share the guilt.

A Bíká was accordingly associated with him. The two went to Changói pretending to be outlaws (báhrotiás), and the Mahárájá sent messengers to Banmáli Dás begging him not to give them refuge, of which communication no notice was taken by Banmáli Dás. Lakhmi Dás told his intended victim that he had brought his daughter to be married to him, and Banmáli Dás, quite deceived, married a slave-girl who personated the thákur's daughter. The night of the marriage the girl put poison ("somal") into the bridegroom's cup, and so Banmáli Dás died. He had been accompanied to Bíkánir by a Na-

He is murdered by Thákur
Lakmi Dás.

wáb, and to make matters square with this Nawáb, the shrewd Ahír Ude Rám was sent. The Nawáb at first threatened vengeance, for he said he well knew how Banmáli Dás' death had been compassed; but a lách of rupees changed his disposition, and he reported to the emperor that Banmáli Dás had died a natural death. No blame fell upon Anúp Singh, and thus, in the words of the "Kiyánt" writer, Banmáli Dás got his deserts (kiye ne púga). Thákur

Lakhmi Dás and the Ahír
Ude Rám rewarded.

Lakhmi Dás received in reward Bás and Rájpúra, and Ude Rám Ahír's descendants are still servants of the darbár and a large village bears his name.

In Sambat 1755 Mahárájá Anúp Singh died at Adúni in the Dakhan.

Death of Mahárájá Anúp
Singh in the Dakhan.

Two Ránis, three khawáss, seven pátrs, four sahelis, and three female attendants became satis.

Ahúp Singh had four sons: Sartúp Singh, Siyán Singh, Rúdr Singh, and Anand Singh.

Before beginning the reign of Anúp Singh's successor, some farther account must

be given of Anúp Singh's brother Padam Singh already

Anecdotes of Padam Singh.

often alluded to. He is *par excellence* the hero of Bíkánir, and occupies in the minds of the people, if we may compare small things with great, the same place which Richard the Lion-hearted holds or held on the minds of the people of England. To the present day his huge sword is reverently preserved, and at certain seasons "púja" is performed before it. Reckless courage, great personal strength, and extreme open-handedness were the characteristics on which Padam Singh's popularity rested, as will be seen by the following anecdotes, which, though greatly exaggerated, are doubtless founded on fact. During his father's life-time he was employed in the Dakhan, and fought at Aurangábád with his brother Mohan Singh. The latter possessed a pet deer, which one day the kotwál officials finding loose in the city tied up and the kotwál appropriated; so that when Mohan Singh's people claimed it, the kotwál declared it had been his for a long time. After an angry altercation Mohan Singh's servants went away, and reported the incident to their master, who was very angry. The next day both brothers went to the emperor's darbár, for the court was then at Aurangábád. Padam Singh had arrived before his brother, and after paying his respects in the darbár, had come out to lounge and smoke with his friends. When Mohan Singh came and entered the ante-room (deori), he met the kotwál, accompanied by his brother-in-law. Mohan Singh complained to the kotwál of the treatment his servants had met with the preceding day, but the kotwál insolently replied that, as regards the deer, both he and his servants lied. A violent quarrel now began. The Bíkánir prince was drawing his sword when the kotwál and his brother-in-law both assaulted him and killed him before he could strike a blow. The uproar was heard on all sides, and Padam Singh left his "hukká" and went to see what had occurred. He found his brother lying with apparently a slight wound in his face, and he said to him: "What! you, a stout man, down from a wound like that!" Mohan Singh replied: "The mortal wound is in my back, and the murdering kotwál lives, though I die." Padam Singh drew his sword, grasped his shield, and hurried into the darbár where the kotwál had gone. The emperor retreated hastily to the palace; the nobles stood in consternation, and some ran away. Padam Singh rushed

upon his enemy, severed him in two with a blow which also left a mark upon the pillar near which the kotwál was standing. He then returned to his dying brother, who pointed out the kotwál's brother-in-law escaping, whom he also killed with a blow which fell like the weapon of Indra. Padam Singh then carried off his brother, none venturing to molest him, and the next day the emperor himself treated him affably, confiscated the kotwál's property, and refused his son access to the palace.

On one occasion when a Nawáb, a friend of the Rájá of Jodhpur, had conspired with the Rájá to murder Karan Singh of Bikanir. Padam Singh, who was on an elephant with his father, disconcerted their plan by a marvellous exhibition of strength, which made the conspirators afraid to attempt any treachery so long as they were within reach of Padam Singh. The feat which cowed them consisted in Padam Singh's dragging the Nawáb's elephant alongside of that on which he and his father were seated by pulling the Nawáb's howdá. Other anecdotes are told of Padam Singh's prowess, which I will not detail.

The generosity of Padam Singh was, to judge from the "Kiyánt," exercised chiefly on minstrels. The author of the "Kiyánt" includes him amongst thirty-one individuals, gods and men, whom during the four "yugs" he considers to have earned the title of "Dátá," or giver. "These," he says, "are dear to all who write of the thirty-six royal races, and their names should be reverently repeated at Parmeshúr's time, i.e., in the early morning."

Padam Singh's great act of levish bounty was the gift of nine lákhs to a Cháran at Udepúr in reward for a single complimentary punning couplet on his name. Another somewhat curious one is related. A Cháran and his wife, near Bikanir, were in great poverty. They reflected that if they were but to apply to Padam Singh, they would be sure of relief; but they neither made nor knew ballads or verses, and were too proud to beg directly. They resorted to a method of getting the money required, and at the same time of preserving their respectability, which I have known to be practised by proud men in poverty elsewhere in Rájputáná. A woman who could write drew up a bond, attested by the sun and moon, purporting to be written by Padam Singh, and pledging him to pay Rs. 140 which he had borrowed from the Cháran. The latter went to the Dakhan with the bond. There Padam Singh received him kindly, and divining his circumstances and motive, acknowledged the bond, and not only ordered that it should be paid, but that with ten rupees additional it should be paid by his heirs and successors annually to the Cháran's representatives, and for two generations it is said to have been actually paid.

The circumstances of Padam Singh's death are dwelt on in great detail by the author of the "Kiyánt," but I will relate them briefly, and shall not attempt to bring the exaggerations within the bounds of truth. In Sambat 1731 there was much fighting in the Dakhan. One Nawáb Dulel Khán is stated to have been in command of the imperial troops on the Tapti, and with him was Antip Singh and his brother Padam Singh. The army was hard-pressed, and Dulel Khán begged Padam Singh to try to keep the enemy in check with a body of 12,000 horse, and protect the supplies which were constantly being cut off.

Satr Sál of Ratlam held joint command with Padam Singh, and there were several other distinguished persons with them. After Padam Singh and Satr Sál had left the main body for the object indicated, it was attacked by Jádú Rái and Sanwant Rái, the leading opposing chiefs. Their attack was sudden and their success seemed assured, when the detached cavalry with Padam Singh at their head attacked the assailants in rear and put them to flight. This done Padam Singh fell back three kós, and gave his brother, the Maharájá, of whom he was jealous, much pain by refusing either to pay or receive a visit, but he declared himself ready for any duty that might come to hand. He had not long to wait. The chiefs above-mentioned made a sudden attack early one morning upon the detachment. On the alarm being given, Padam Singh coolly said that he should finish his morning devotions before he went to fight, and Satr Sál began the action with half the force. He protected the batteries, but the Dakhanis pressed hard and the standard was in danger of being lost. Padam Singh was informed of this just as he was finishing his prayers. He dressed hurriedly and went forth. Finding the "nagará" bearer wounded, he told him to lie quiet that day and not to fight, and when the wounded man declared he would remain with him, he asked if he thought he could not protect the "bairisal nagará" (kettle-drum-frightening the enemy, see page 13) alone that day.

The Dakhanis were in two bands—one of foot headed by Sanwant Rái, the other of horse commanded by Jádú Rái on an elephant. Padam Singh charged the infantry and penetrated to Sanwant Rái, and he drove his spear not only through the Dakhanis' chest and back, but also through his horse's back and privy parts, and one

cubit beyond them "as though a black devil had struck." Padam Singh then drew one of the two swords he carried and slew fifty-three of the enemy who surrounded him. His horse was disabled, but a follower gave him up his horse named "Patásá," and formerly a gift to him from Padam Singh. By this time Padam Singh had lost half his force, but he still fought on and killed one of Jádú Rái's generals; when again he lost his horse. Obtaining another he slew eight more of the enemy, which now surrounded him on all sides. He was covered with wounds, as also was Satr Sál. At this juncture he desired the young Prince of Ratlám, who was by his side, to withdraw from the fight if possible. "You withdraw," was the reply of the prince. "What! am I Ját-suckled?" returned Padam Singh, thus showing that in that age Játs were thought meanly of, Súrajmal not as yet having arisen.

Soon but few men remained with Padam Singh, who, perceiving that the "nishán" and "nagará" were in imminent danger of capture, charged with his few men, among whom, as though to belie Padam Singh's recent words, was a Ját who showed special gallantry. Dismounted, Padam Singh fought on foot, cutting in two all whom he struck. At length he fell senseless "like a wounded lion," and his surviving followers did what they could to save themselves. The victor, Jádú Rái, was in the deepest distress from the death of his brother Sanwant Rái, killed by Padam Singh, and clamoured to be confronted with his slayer. Search was made, and 200 "paundas" (the space between the hands stretched out to the right and left) from the funeral pile preparing for Sanwant Rái, Padam Singh was found sitting still alive, though partly stupefied by his wounds. He had made one or two balls (pind*) of blood and earth, and a stream of blood "like a branch of coral" flowed from his body. There was not a spot on it as large as a finger's point unwounded. His sword and shield had fallen from his hand, but a dagger was in his girdle. Jádú Rái seeing his enemy, struck him a blow; and Padam Singh, roused by it, with a dying effort sprang up, seized Jádú Rái, dragged him from his horse, threw him on the ground, knelt on him, drove his dagger three times through his chest and back, and expired with the last thrust. Padam Singh, though dead, had done his work, for he had slain the two Dakhaní leaders, and their hands dispersed in consequence.

A "chhatrí" was built over the ashes of Padam Singh on the banks of the Taptí, and four of his wives died sati on receiving news of the death of their lord. The date of Padam Singh's death was Sambat 1739. Satr Sál of Ratlám escaped with his life, but he had received eighty-four wounds; he and others who had from twenty-seven to seventy wounds recovered.

The two brothers Kesrí Singh and Padam Singh each held mansabs from the Emperor Alamgir. Kesrí Singh's was of Rs. 2,500. He was killed in Kángra in Sambat 1727. His honors were probably earned in the great battle which placed Aurangzeb on the throne, for he then greatly distinguished himself. Padam Singh had a mansab of Rs. 2,000, and with it he held a grant of Etáwáh and Mainpúrí.

Sarup Singh.

Sarup Singh was born Sambat 1746, and succeeded to the Bikánir "gadí" Sambat 1755. He was with his father at Adúní when he died, and he remained in the Dakhan after his accession, his mother, a Sesodiá princess, being in power at Bikánir, where the officials were quarrelling. One Lallat, a "názir" or eunuch, was the Rání's right-hand man, and his principal opponents were some thákurs, amongst whom were the owners of Zanáné intrigues in Bikánir. Bhubarko and Jessáno. The last, Prithwí Ráj by name, was musáhib or general, and Lallat to get rid of him persuaded the Rání, when she happened to be sick, that he had tried to poison her. She was consequently most anxious to destroy both him and his friends which was effected by the eunuch and Mukúnd Rái (the treacherous conqueror of the Bhátís), who induced Prithwí Ráj and his followers to come to the palace to hear letters read from the young Maharájá in the Dakhan.

* "Pind" is used as offerings to ancestors.

They were made prisoners first and then murdered in cold blood—an act Lallat leaves the Rájá's mother which caused great indignation throughout the and takes service with another country. Lallat, the eunuch, was blamed by the dowager Ráni, a Rájáwat. Mahárájá, and seems to have lost his position with the Sesodiá Ráni. For a short time after the murder he is mentioned as being in the employ of a Rájáwat dowager Ráni, whose two sons, Suján Singh and Anand Singh, were, she conceived, in danger of being murdered by the Sesodiá, as the latter feared one of them might supplant their half-brother the Mahárájá.

The Rájáwat Ráni accordingly arranged to send them to Dehli under The Rájáwat sends him away charge of Lallat. They were on their way there, in charge of her sons, Suján and had already gone three marches when a Singh and another.

Jaisalmir Bháti, who was in their train and who bore a great reputation as a seer, pronounced the omens against further progress for sixteen watches, and the party therefore halted for that period. It had expired, and they were about to proceed on their way when two "Kásids" (messengers), bearing despatches from the Dakhan, arrived bound for Bikánir. They refused to tell any news, but Lallat took forcible possession of the

On his way gets intelligence of the Rájá's death.

Returns and makes Suján Singh Rájá.

despatches, and discovered that Mahárájá Sarup Singh had died of small-pox. Suján Singh, the eldest of the two sons of the Rájáwat dowager, was now the rightful chief of Bikánir, and Lallat at once returned with his charge to the palace, assembled the officials, and proclaimed Suján Singh Mahárájá; Baisakh Sudi 7, Sambat 1757.

Suján Singh.

Suján Singh, son of Anup Singh, was born in Sambat 1747 (A.D. 1690), and succeeded to the "gadi" Sambat 1757 (A.D. 1700). He was employed in the Dakhan at the time of the Emperor Aurangzeb's death immediately after which event Ajit Singh, Rájá of Jodhpúr, planned to seize Bikánir. The Bidáwats on the frontier were ill-disposed towards Suján Singh and began to intrigue with the Jodhpúr chief. Karan Singh of Gopálpúrá, however, and Bihári Dás of Bidásar were stoutly loyal, and were consequently seized and confined by Ajit Singh; but they managed to communicate with their friends at Bikánir, and to acquaint them with the plan of the Rájá. Opposition on the part of Bikánir was not sufficient to prevent the occupation of the city by the Jodhpúr forces, and the "án" (oath of fealty) of Ajit Singh was enforced, though not without protest, for Rámji, a blacksmith of the Bikánir "mandi" or market, cut down the Jodhpúr banner, declaring that the "án" of Suján Singh and no other there prevailed. Before he could be slain by Jodhpúris he killed five of them. Judging from the minuteness of the details recorded, the circumstances of this occupation would seem to have left a deep impression. Thus the "Kiyánt" mentions that the Jodhpúr vakíl and Pirthi Ráj, Thákur of Bukarkho and leader of the Bikánir forces, held a colloquy on the spot where the butchers now dwell. Finally, Ajit Singh resolved to withdraw his troops which suffered much from the heat and want of water. Pirthi Ráj obtained great credit for his conduct, and when Suján Singh returned to Bikánir, he conferred on him, as a mark of distinction, the right to tie his "pagri" on the left side of his head.

In A.D. 1719, the year that Muhammad Sháh took his seat on the throne of Delhi—a year, it is stated, of great plenty—Mahárájá

Suján Singh returns home from the Dakhan.

Disregards the orders of the emperor.

Suján Singh returned to Bikanír after ten years' service in the Dakhan; and although royal messengers (ahadis) came to summon him to Delhi, the weakness of the empire was now such that he did not think it necessary to obey, but in order not entirely to break with the emperor, he sent a force to serve him. Shortly after, Ajit Singh is said to have made an attempt to seize the person of Suján Singh when out hunting away from his

Ajit Singh, the raja of fort; but a "Sripuji" or Jain priest being warned in Jodhpúr, attempts to capture Suján Singh.

There were on him, and he had only just time to return to the fort when five hundred horse from Jodhpúr suddenly appeared. Their leader was one Dip Chand Biás, who professed to be the bearer of presents and compliments from Rájá Ajit Singh in connection with the recent birth of a son of Ajit Singh. Some time after, Suján Singh felt secure enough to absent

himself for some weeks from Bikanír in order to get married at Dungarpúr. On his way back he was invited to Udepúr by the Ráná, with whom he stayed for a month enjoying the sports of Mewar. His horse "Jambu dip" attracted much attention by its wonderful leaping powers and when the Ráná admired it he presented it to him fully equipped.

In Sambat 1787, the Mahárájá proceeded with a force to Nohar to punish

Quels an insurrection of the Bhatís and Johiyás.

the insurgent Bhattís and Johiyás. The Bhattís submitted, humbly presented the keys of the fort of Bhatner, and paid a "peshkash" of Rs. 20,000. Another insurrection about the same time was headed by Daulat Singh Kándhalot. Him the Mahárájá had killed in some treacherous manner (chuk kar máriyo).

In Sambat 1790, after an interval of more than a quarter of a century,

Third invasion of Bikanír by Jodhpúr.

Jodhpúr again invaded Bikanír. Rájá Abhai Singh then sat on the Jodhpúr "gad," but the invading force, 15,000 strong, was headed by his bold brother Bakht Singh. Zoráwar Singh, eldest Kanwar or son of Sarúp Singh, was then at Nohar with 22,000 men. He marched to protect the capital, and in a battle a Taláo Najásar Bakht Singh was defeated. Abhai Singh, however, supported him with 80,000 men, who encamped near the city of Bikanír; but they suffered so much from want of supplies and water that Abhai Singh sent Bakht Singh to the Ráná of Udepúr to beg him to assist in negotiating terms of peace. The Ráná accordingly sent mediators, and Abhai Singh, who was not now in a position to press any demand on Bikanír, was glad to be permitted to retire unpursued. So hurried was the retreat that the pole of the Holí fire, which the Jodhpúris had planted as usual on the first of Phágan and which ought to remain undisturbed till the 15th of the month when it is burnt, was placed in a cart and carried to Nágor, where the two brothers held the Holí festival. This evidence of the straits to which the Jodhpúr host had been reduced afforded great pleasure at Bikanír, and a satirical ballad commemorating the circumstances is on record.

After these events an ill-feeling arose between the Maháráj Kanwar

Quarrel between Suján Zoráwar Singh and his father, the Rájá, in consequence of the dislike of the Kanwar towards one Singh.

Khawás Anand Rám. The Mahárájá strove to humor his son, but the latter would hear of nothing less than the murder of Anand

Rām, and as he was not gratified, he left Bikanir and resided chiefly at Nohar. There he obtained assassins who succeeded in killing Anand Rām by night. Zorāwar Singh then moved with his force towards Bikanir, and encamped at village Udāsar, one kós distant. The advisers of the Rājā urged him to avoid a collision with his son, and in order to bring the latter to his father, two Rānis went to Zorāwar Singh at Udāsar. A reconciliation was effected. Zorāwar Singh agreed to do homage to his father, and the latter to make over to him all power, which the Kanwar soon had to exercise against a rebellious Bhāti thākur, Ude Singh of Jaimalsar. The Bhāti was compelled to pay Rs. 5,000 "peshkash," and to do service in person.

At this time Bakht Singh, the brother of the Rājā of Jodhpur, held Nāgor and cherished ambitious designs upon Bikanir. With the Sankhlā Killadār of him Daulat Singh, descendant of Nāpo, the Sankhlā the Bikanir Fort conspires him Daulat Singh, descendant of Nāpo, the Sankhlā to betray the fort to Jodhpur and hereditary killadār of the Bikanir Fort, entered into a conspiracy and promised to betray his charge.

Several other persons were induced to join, and amongst them Ude Singh of Jaimalsar and Siwā Parohit. Other conspirators were Bhagwān Dās, son of Gordhan, and his two sons. The plot had ripened; Kanwar Zorāwar Singh had gone to Udāsar, and the fort was thus deprived of its best defender. It so happened that Jetsi Parihār, a grandson of Rājāsi and one of the hereditary Parihār servants of the state, was connected by marriage with the malcontent Ude Singh, and at the same time high in favor with the Darbār, to which he was devotedly faithful. Jetsi and Ude Singh at this juncture went to the

The plot fails. Mahārāj Kanwar at Udāsar, where Ude Singh gave a feast. As Ude Singh became heated with wine,

he let drop words which showed that he had some great secret in his keeping, whereupon Jetsi pressed him to disbosom himself to him, his relation and friend. Jetsi soon discovered that the seizure of the fort that very night had been arranged. Instantly sent a camelman (ōti) to summon those of his people who were near, while he himself repaired to the fort, about a kós distant. Going to the bastion where Parihārs were on duty, he shouted to them to let down a rope, as the gates being shut he could not get into the fort. When he had been drawn up, he hurried to the zanānā door, and when the Mahārājā, induced by his urgent messages, came to him, he told the treachery of the Sankhlā. The Mahārājā then went with Jetsi to the Surajpol (Sun Gate), which was found to be unlocked, as also were the other gates of the fort; while at the Killadār's post, in spite of the lateness of the hour, conversation was going on. Precautions were taken, the guns of the fort were fired, so that the Killadār's messengers, who had gone to fetch Bakht Singh with 2,000 horse lying ready at a convenient distance, knew that the conspiracy had been discovered; and Bakht Singh and the other conspirators accordingly beat a timely retreat. In the fort the Sankhlā guard, consisting of ten men, were after a fight, all killed. After this event the gates of the fort were entrusted to a Dhābhāi, while to Jetsi Parihār was confided the management of the state.

It was but a few months after the conspiracy above described that Sujān Singh died, Pōh Sud 13th, Sambat 1792, at Bai Singhpura, where he had gone to settle a quarrel between the Thākur of Bāhadrān and Bukarkho. Five "pārs" or mistresses of inferior rank were burnt with the Rājā's body at Raisinghpura, and two days afterwards, when the news reached Bikanir, four Rānis also were burnt with the Rājā's pagri.

Sujān Singh had two sons, Zorāwar Singh and Abhai Singh.

Zoráwar Singh.

Zoráwar Singh sat on the Bikánir "gadh" Mágh Budi 9, Sambat 1792 (A.D. 1735). He was born Mágh Budi 14, Sambat 1769. He began his rule by expelling some Jodhpúr troops who occupied "thánás" in Bikánir territory on the border of the two states.

After this the Mahárájá found it necessary to take the field in order to bring the state into order. Sangráam Singh, Thákur of Chúrú, being disaffected, was expelled and another put into his place, but on his going to Jodhpúr, the Mahárájá came to terms with him and restored his estate. As, however, Sangráam Singh went to Chúrú without coming first to do homage at Bikánir the breach was re-opened, and Sangráam Singh again went to Jodhpúr with a considerable following.

In Sambat 1796 the Jodhpúr attacks on Bikánir were renewed. Thákur Sangráam Singh of Chúrú had been enabled to obtain a force of 10,000 men, with which he entered Bikánir territory. The Thákur of Asoph approached, *via* Philodi, with 15,000 men, but Bakht Singh had a quarrel with his brother Abháí Singh, Rájá of Jodhpúr, and desired to ally himself with Bikánir. Zoráwar Singh at first distrusted him and required a proof of his sincerity, whereupon Bakht Singh took Mertia from Jodhpúr. It was then agreed that Bakht Singh should attack Jodhpúr in the absence of his brother, who was with the army invading Bikánir. A Bikánir contingent of 8,000 men, under Bakhtáwar Singh Mehtar, joined Bakht Singh, and the Jodhpúr chief, intimidated by the aspect of affairs, came to terms with Bakht Singh, to whom he agreed to pay two lákhs. Mertia was restored to Abháí Singh, and both the brothers then retired to their cities. Bakht Singh dismissed the Bikánir contingent with all honor, and on its return the officers described Bakht Singh to their master as a man and something more (21 biswás).

At this period Bhatner was in the hands of the Johiyás from whom Bhím Singh, Thákur of Mahájan, received permission to take it. He was joined by Raotot and Biká Thákurs, and a ráj official Mahta Raghúnáth Rati accompanied the force. The Mahájan thákur in council with his coadjutors resolved to entice Málá, the Johiyá chief of Talwára who held Bhatner, to a conference and then treacherously to kill him. First of all matchlocks and daggers were sent to Bhatner in the name of a Seth as though for sale, and a company of Rájputs in disguise with them. The Johiyá was then invited to a feast at which he was poisoned with "somal," together with the 70 sowárs who came with him. Having stabbed their victims to make the more sure of them, the Ráthors took their horses and rode to Bhatner, where, with the aid of the party and matchlocks, they killed Málá's sons and the rest of the garrison, and took possession of the fort, in which they found four lákhs of rupees and gold mohurs besides. This treasure the Mahájan thákur took possession of to the disgust of the ráj official and the other thákurs. At this period the Jodhpúr attack on Bikánir already described took place, and the force was hastily summoned to Bikánir. The Darbár afterwards employed Hassan Khán, Bhatti, to take Bhatner from Mahájan. He invested the fort, and got possession of two bastions, on which the Thákur of Mahájan buried a lách of gold mohurs and evacuated the fort; and thus having lost both the plunder and the stronghold, he joined Sangráam Singh of Chúrú and Lál Singh of Báhrán,

and they all united with Mahārājāh Abhai Singh of Jodhpūr, who again invaded Bikānir with a very large force. When he reached Deshnuk he worshipped at the temple of Karniji and desired the Chārāns in charge to address him in the style adopted towards the Mahārājā of Bikānir, saying that it would be Karniji's interest to assist him; but they refused. The city was not defended, and Abhai Singh gave up a portion of it to plunder for three watches (pahar) and about a lākḥ of "lūt" was taken. Rājā Abhai Singh's tent was pitched on the site of the old fort near the temple of Lakḥmī Nāth. He had a battery planted at the Anūp Sāgar's ehātri, another in the east slope (sāran) of the Anūp Sāgar well, and a third at the dwelling-place of the Dinglī Swāmi. The Sūr Sāgar was occupied by the invaders, and the Bāhdrān thākūr had a battery and took up his quarters on the central "chabūtrā" of the Gīnāni tank. The guns of the fort were well served. Bikās, Bidāwats, and Rāotots formed the garrison, and Kushāl Singh, of Bukarkho, was the leading thākūr. The loss from the bombardment was considerable. One gun especially, called the "Shimbhūbān," placed on the present site of the artillery lines, did much mischief, and Kanwar Gaj Singh, whose post was opposite it, remarked on the skilfulness of the gunners and the desirability of destroying them. This was effected by a Parihār with a "Ramchangī" gun, which he asked to be allowed to use. Gaj Singh himself pointed a gun which struck the "Shimbhūbān" and made it unserviceable.

Karniji now made it manifest that she had not deserted her own people. Two Parihārs, who had been sleeping on the Sūr Mandir in the fort, saw, when they rose one morning, a pure white kite (sānwli) on the balcony (katero) of the Sujān Singh Mahal, and feeling convinced that it was Karniji, they went and told the Mahārājā, who came and saw the wonder. He addressed the kite in a couplet expressing welcome and confidence, to which some one present rejoined with another couplet on the anticipated confusion of the invaders. The Mahārājā besought the bird to fly on to a swing (hindlāt), and to eat some sweetmeats (nai bed). The bird complied and a Pandī fed it out of a silver vessel. It then flew off towards Deshnuk, leaving the Mahārājā re-assured by the sign.

Efforts were made to detach the Bāhdrān thākūr from Abhai Singh. The Mahārājā even visited him at his post to the extreme dissatisfaction of Khushāl Singh, who up-braided him for running such a risk. The incident became known in the fort, where the adventure of the Mahārājā and the reproaches of Khushāl Singh formed the burden of a song.

Bakht Singh of Nāgor now showed a disposition to aid Bikānir, but he had to send twice before any notice was taken of his messages. Mahtā Anand Rām was then accredited to Bakht Singh, who learnt from him that although Bikānir needed relief there were ample munitions in the fort. Bakht Singh told the Mahtā that he was at the service of the Mahārājā of Bikānir body and goods (tan dhan), but that they must get aid from Mahārājā Jai Singh of Jaipūr, where accordingly the Mahtā went, accompanied by an agent of Bakht Singh. Jai Singh was not more disposed to trust Bakht Singh than the Bikānir chief had at first been, and to win his confidence Bakht Singh had again to take possession of Mertia. Jai Singh then promised his assistance, and jestingly asked the Mahtā where Karniji and Lakḥmī Nāthji could be that they permitted Bikānir to be reduced to such straits. The Mahtā replied: "Mahārāj! they must be embodied in you, since you consent to give such help." This pleased the Mahārājā, who was induced to write a "kharitā" to the chief of Bikānir and a note (rukā) to

Khushál Singh, telling him he was on the point of marching and that they must "keep heart." At the same time a Bikánir vakíl at Dehli sent word to Jaipur that a re-assuring letter from the emperor had been sent to Bikánir, informing the Mahárájá that even if he had lost the fort, Abhai Singh should be ousted from it as a "Bhút" by fire.

Twenty thousand Jaipur troops, under Rájá Mal Khatrí, joined Bakht Singh at Mertia, but the Bikánir agent urged Jai Singh to take the field in person. The Mahárájá consulted his chief followers, some of whom deprecated interference; but Sheo Singh of Sikar, a man of great note, pointed out the folly of permitting Jodhpur to annex Bikánir, and thus increase in strength sufficiently to become a dangerous neighbour. Sheo Singh's argument prevailed, and the Mahárájá marched with his whole force. Abhai Singh on hearing that his territory was invaded sent to the Ráná of Udepur for help. The Ráná recommended him to leave Bikánir if Zoráwar Singh would consent to make him a humble salutation (naknaman). On this being proposed to Zoráwar Singh, he said: "Jai Singh will give my answer."

The Jaipur force had not made many marches through Jodhpur territory when news arrived that the siege of Bikánir had been raised, and that Abhai Singh was pursued by Bikánir troops. A commemorative couplet says that the siege had lasted three months and five days. Abhai Singh's retreat was very hasty. He himself hurried on with 2,000 horse to Jodhpur, which he feared would fall into the hands of Jai Singh. The policy of the latter, however, was to keep both states in *statu quo*, and when a council of war, ostensibly to determine the next step, was held, no business was done, and only banter and jests were exchanged. Amongst the distinguished persons present at this darbár are mentioned, besides Rájá Bakht Singh of Nágor, Ráo Rájá Diler Singh of Bundi, Rájá Inder Singh of Sheopur in Gwálior, Amír Singh Sesodiá of Sháhpurá, Súraj Mal Ját of Bharatpur, Rájá Gopál of Karauli, the Badouria Rájá, and Bahádúr Singh of Rúp-nagar in Kishangarh. Bakht Singh was much disappointed at the manifest intention to do nothing, and in his interest Mahtá Anand Rúp went round to Mahárájá Jai Singh, who remarked that Govind Deoji* had made them successful, and that he proposed to take hostages for the indemnity (fauj kharch) he should exact and go away. The Mahtá who had told Bakht Singh that Girdhárji would grant the "desire of his heart," pointed out to the Mahárájá what efforts Bakht Singh had made in the matter, and hoped that he would obtain some reward. But Jai Singh was intent only on obtaining his "peshkash" which was fixed at 21 lakhs of rupees. Eleven lakhs of this were paid in jewels which had come to Jodhpur as part of the dowry of Jai Singh's daughter, who was married to Abhai Singh. They were brought in a golden dish to Jai Singh, who, instead of showing annoyance, remarked: "Ah; they are Jodhpur jewels now; take them." For the remaining ten lakhs hostages were given.

On the invitation of the Jaipur chief, Zoráwar Singh came to Bana, in Jodhpur, to meet his deliverer. At their interview Meeting of Rájás Jai Singh and Zoráwar Singh. Zoráwar Singh remarked that the aid just rendered crowned generations of friendly intercourse between the two states, and a minstrel repeated the following couplet:

"Abhai Báj gripped Bikánir as an elephant a "grah" (water animal),
Jai Singh heard the cry for help and like Harji † gave aid."

* One of the protecting deities of Jaipur.

† Or Govind Deoji. His temple at Jaipur is in the palace garden north of the Tripolia.

Jai Singh replied that he had done nothing; that he was under an obligation to act for Bikanir, for Rao Sangoji, by the aid of Rao Jetsi of Bikanir, whose sister he had married, took Amer. Bikanir was therefore entitled to help in return, and Govind Deo had granted it.

After this the Jaipur chief lent aid to Zorawar Singh in putting down his own rebellious thakurs, and Sádul Singh, the famous Shekhawat, and Raj Singh of Jhilai marched against the Saindasot accompanied by Mahta Bakhtawar Singh. Sangram Singh of Churú and Lal Singh of Bahdrán were preparing to resist. The latter had ten guns given him by his recent patron Abhai Singh, which were taken from him when he came into collision with Sádul Singh at Bai, whence he fled to Bahadrán. There Sádul Singh followed him, and obtained his submission and engagement to pay a "peshkash" of a lakh of rupees. The thakur was brought by Sádul Singh to Jaipur, where he was imprisoned, and peace was established in Bikanir.

Anand Rúp Mahta for his diplomatic services received the title of "Gai Bhúm-ká-Báhrú," and distinctions were conferred on Mahta Bakhtawar Singh, recent commander of the contingent serving with Bakht Singh.

On his pledge of safety Sangram Singh of Churú was induced to come to Sátu, where the Maharaja was encamped, and there he and his brother, Bohpat Singh, were treacherously murdered in their tent. The Maharaja then himself occupied the Churú fort, confiscated all the moveable property, and expelled all the Banirots (the clan of the Churú thakur) except those in raj service. After sequestering the estate for six months, it was bestowed on Dhirat Singh, a son of the murdered Sangram Singh. The "Kiyant" contains an account of Bakht Singh's reconciliation with his brother Abhai Singh, their attack on Jaipur, and the battle of Gangaro. Tod apparently exaggerates the patriotism of Bakht Singh, who, it seems, acted against Jai Singh, because the latter had refused to aid his designs on the Jodhpur "gadi." Jai Singh sent Mahta Anand Rúp to urge Zorawar Singh to lay waste Nagor which Zorawar Singh had been hesitating to do. On his way Anand Rúp fell ill and died at village Bassi not far from Pohkar, and he was burnt at the latter place. Jai Singh soon marched back to Jaipur having come to terms with the Jodhpur leaders, and having restored to Bakht Singh the elephant taken at Gangaro which carried his "thakur" (idol) and other valued articles. Soon after Zorawar Singh paid a second visit to Jai Singh, who came as far as the Chandpol gate of Jaipur to meet him. Zorawar Singh remained six months at Jaipur, during which the Mahtas having fallen into disfavor were deprived of office. The mint (sikdari) always alluded to as an important charge, also changed hands. But on the return of the Maharaja to Bikanir a Mahta was again made diwan. The Bhattis and Johiyas were at this time troublesome and the Maharaja resolved if possible to take Hissar from these two tribes who held it and who are called in the Kiyant "Classes of Turks." As was the practice with the chiefs of Bikanir before entering on any great undertaking, the Maharaja first visited the Shrine of Karnaji, and leaving at Nohar the troops under Kanwar Gaj Singh and Shekhawat Nahar Singh

Murder of the Churú thakur.

Maharaja occupies Churú.

Contest between Bakht Singh of Nagor and the Raja of Jaipur.

Zorawar Singh visits Jaipur.

deprived of office. The

Officials.

Maharaja visits Karnaji preparatory to an invasion of Hissar.

and Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh he went to Bikánir and sent his whole family on foot to Deshnuk. He himself followed them, and also walked from the border of the wood which surrounds the shrine. He visited the shrine accompanied by his Ránis united to him by knots in their scarves (Ghatjori). Four Chárans' wives also went with the party, to each of whom a necklace was given. Other presents were bestowed on persons attached to the shrine. Food was distributed and a rupee and a blanket given to each family in the village. A golden umbrella presented on this occasion to Karníji is still to be seen above her image.

Advantage was taken of the return of a Ráni from the Soram Ghát on the Ganges to establish an alliance with the Ráo Ahír of Gújar Mal of Rewari, by which town the Ráni's party passed. The Ráo was to attack Hánsi while Zoráwar Singh co-operated on the Bikánir border. But disturbances in Bikánir territory, and the attitude of Bakht Singh now hostile to his old ally, caused delays which irritated Ráo Gújar Mal who needed aid against the imperial troops. At length a force was sent under Bakhtáwar Singh, Mahtá, and Daulat Singh, Thákur of Báí, which marched towards Hánsi while the Mahárájá occupied Hissar. At the same time another force acted against the Bhattis of Fatiábád.

After the taking of Hissár the Mahárájá fell ill, and after continuing so far four days died at Anúppúrá in Bikánir territory, not without suspicion of poison. Two Ránis, one

Death of Mahárájá Zoráwar Singh.

Satis.

khawás (mistress of the first rank), eleven pátrs (mistresses of the second rank), five mánas (slave-girls), and, strange to say, one Bráhman, employed in the cooking establishment of a pátr, and two slave-girls of pátrs, all became sati. They were consumed with the corps at Anúppúrá, all except the Ránis and a pátr, who were burnt with the Mahárájá's "pagri" at Bikánir.

Thakur Khushál Singh and Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh secured the fort and the city, for great anxiety was felt about the Thákur Khushál Singh of the Bukarkho and Mahtá Bakhtáwar succession, the late Rájá having died childless. Singh procure the election of Two sons of his younger brother, Anand Singh, had Gaj Singh to the "gadi." taken the field, supported by Bakht Singh. They encamped at Ládno on the border and ravaged Bikánir. Khushál Singh sent a messenger bearing as a token a certain ring (bití) by means of which the claimants were induced to come to a conference at Garbala, where they encamped under a "khejrá" tree which bore a fakir's flag. Gaj Singh, their elder brother, who was favored by Khushál Singh, encamped under another "khejrá" tree, where the village gods (Bhúmiás) were situated. Omens were then observed: they indicated that the lord of the land (Bhúmdhani) was under the Bhúmiás' khejrá. Amar Singh, the other aspirant, however, would not give way; but Gaj Singh's merits were known to all the officials and influential persons, and Khushál Singh, addressing a speech to those with him, had little difficulty in persuading them to accept Gaj Singh as their future master. Gaj Singh was then secretly summoned to Bikánir from the khejrá tree; but at the fort gate, when offered the "gadi" of Bikánir, a curious condition was imposed upon him. The Thákur and Mahtá stipulated that they should not be called to account for the expenditure of stores and treasure during the siege of the Bikánir fort by Abhai Singh. Gaj Singh, taking the Séligrám in his hands, swore not to take them to task: all difficulty to his accession was thus removed, and Asádh Bud 14th, Sambat 1802, at the time of morning prayer (Mangal arati) Gaj Singh took his seat on the "gadi."

The "tilak" was placed on his forehead, the guns were fired, the "nobat" sounded, and the new Rájá proclaimed.

Amar Singh and his brother, the rival claimants at Garbala, heard the guns and their suspicions were aroused. They sent to see if Gaj Singh was still under his "khejra" tree: Anger of the other claimants. apparently he was, and fast asleep upon his bed. But soon it became known that a Bhárat named Sattidán was personating him, and then Amar Singh thought it time to mount and be off. Uttering threats he turned his horse's head towards Jodhpúr.

Gaj Singh.

Gaj Singh was born in Sambat 1780. His mother was a Shekháwat. He took his seat on the "gadi" Asádh Bud 14th, Accession of Gaj Singh. Sambat 1802 (A. D. 1745), and his first recorded act was to show honor to Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh, whom he caused to sit down before him.

Rájá Abhai Singh of Jodhpúr was at Ajmir when Gaj Singh obtained the "gadi". There the disappointed claimant Amar Singh arrived and found other Bikanír nobles. Intrigues of the discontented Bikanír nobles. malcontents in attendance—Bhím Singh of Mahá-jan and Lal Singh of Bahádrán—who after the death of Sawái Jai Singh had been released from Jaipúr. The three comforted one another with the reflection that Gaj Singh was but the nominee of Thákur Khushál Singh, and that the goddess Lakhmi Nath (joint patron with Karníji of Bikanír) would doubtless appoint Amar Singh.

A large force for the invasion of Bikanír was prepared by Abhai Singh, of which Raghunáth Champáwat, Anup Singh Champáwat, Ratan Chánd, Bhandári, and "Modhi" Tíkam Dás were the leaders. The army was of course accompanied by the three discontented sardárs, and after doing some mischief on its march encamped in the neighborhood of Bikanír. Bikanír troops, owing to the hostility of Jodhpúr, had been sometime kept ready for action, and were strong enough to meet the Jodhpúr invading force in the open field. But no decisive battle was fought, although for months they faced one another. At length Jodhpúr proposed a division of the territory as the only means of terminating the struggle. Gaj Singh in reply said: "We will not give up a needle's length of territory, and to-morrow sword in hand we will further discuss the question of peace." Before going to battle Mahárájá Gaj Singh prayed to Karníji, the divine protectress of Bikanír, saying:

Gaj Singh proposes to fight a battle. "Oh mother, this ráj is your gift! Now, as token of your presence, cause a dry goat to shiver as it stands for sacrifice."* A Karníji is propitious. goat shivered and the Mahárájá exclaimed: "I will fight; the sign has been given." The Bikanír

army was in three divisions (ini) and about 20,000 strong. In the middle division, consisting of Bidáwats, Ráotots and Bíkás, the Mahárájá placed himself with a Bíká, a Bida, and a Ráotot beside him. The right division, consisting of Bhátis, Rúpáwats and Mandaláwats, was led by a thákur of Bái, Mahtá Bhím Singh, and a parohit, while on the left was Tára Singh of Bái, Dhíraj Singh of Cháru, and Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh; with the Banirots Khushál Singh of Bukarkho and Daulat Singh of Bái.

* Water is, as a rule, thrown on the sacrificial goat as it stands before the image. It shivers, and then the blow is struck, as that is thought to be an indication of the Deity's presence and acceptance of the offering.

and Mahtá Raghunáth Singh led the van, and in the rear was Pem Singh Bika with the hazúri sepoys or Maharájá's guard. At a well called the "Sujándesar" a section of the Jodhpúr force, Udáwats and people of village Jíntha near Mertia, had erected an earthwork which the Bikanír right wing assaulted and took. Bhandári Ratan Chand seeing the reverse struck the ground with his hands "like a tiger in rage" and brought up all the force he could to retake the earthwork where the battle raged furiously, and the "dhádís" (professional singers) sang the "sindú" (battle song). Gaj Singh's horse (for he descended from his elephant) was shot through the head, and a ball grazed his shoulder, being turned aside by the hand of Karníji. At this point 4,000 Bikanír horse contended with 6,000 under the Bhandári. The confusion was great. Amar Singh with a party attacked the Maharája's elephant on which they thought him still seated. The maháwats on both sides were killed, and a Bikanír thákur rushing to rescue his chief ran Amar Singh through the back with a spear. Bhím Singh of Mahájan, too, was dangerously wounded, and Rájá Gaj Singh had a second horse killed under him. He then mounted an elephant which Bhandári Ratan Chand approached. Him Gaj Singh drawing a bow shot through the eye; but in spite of their wounds the Bhandári, Amar Singh, and Bhim Singh managed to retreat

Defeat of the Jodhpúris.

with their forces, which, having lost eight of their leaders and five hundred soldiers, gave way. When the Maharájá saw the Bhandári making off, he shouted: "See, the rascal, though wounded, escapes;" whereupon a thákur, Sarúp Singh of Jetpúr, galloped after him and ran him through the back. Then returning he made a bow to the Maharájá, who was much pleased. On the Bikanír side only seventeen or

Bikanír losses in the battle. eighteen persons of note were killed, amongst them a son of the late Mahtá Anand Rúp and a Musalmán kotwál. Amongst the wounded, who were numerous, was a Bráhmaṇ, Parihárs, and a Bháti holding the hereditary office of "Faujdar." The Jodhpúr

The Jodhpúr greater.

loss was double, and so complete was its defeat that it had to burn its tents and retire to Jodhpúr to the extreme vexation of Rájá Abhai Singh, who sent a force under another Bhandári to threaten Bikanír from Didwáná. A poem attests this victory, which took place in Sambat 1804.

As some of the Bidáwats were in insurrection, the Maharájá took

Murder of Bidáwat thákurs.

advantage of his camp being at Chápar near Stján-garh to bring them to order. Some on a promise of safety were induced to come to their chief at Chápar, where three, Mohbat Singh, Devi Singh, and Sangráṁ Singh, were treacherously murdered, the effect of which act was to produce peace throughout the land.

After these events Bikanír troops, with the Maharájá at their head,

Gaj Singh aids Bakht Singh in Jodhpúr.

marched to Sámbar to aid Bakht Singh, who was again engaged in a struggle with his brother Rájá Abhai Singh. Bakht Singh received him with much honor, coming two kos to meet him and presenting a nazar. When the Maharájá returned Bakht Singh's visit, he treated him as an equal, for he recognised him as the Rájá of Jodhpúr. Bakht Singh, as they sat

beside one another, remarked that when 1 is Bakht Singh's compliment. placed by 1 it makes not 2 but eleven (11), and

it was wrong to suppose that the Maharájá's arrival merely doubled his strength. Abhai Singh, with his Marhatta ally, marched to attack his brother, but through the intervention of Jaipúr a reconciliation was effected and Gaj Singh returned to Bikanír. It was reported

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to him that his father Anand Singh was dying at Reni, but instead of going

Difficulties with the Bhátis of Bhikampúr. to see him, he preferred attacking the Bhátis of Bhikampúr who had misbehaved. On the inter-

cession of one Kumbkaran Bhátí Bhikampúr was spared; but, as it refused to pay the "peshkash" imposed, Kumbkaran was employed to reduce it. He soon took Bhikampúr and slew the thákur, and the fort was put into the possession of the ráj officials. During this

Death of Gaj Singh's father. transaction the Maharájá's father died in the absence of the Maharájá, who reproached himself for not going at once when told of his danger.

After "duadso" (feeding of Bráhmans on the 12th day of mourning)

The Maharájá pardons the rebellious Maháján thákur. the Maharájá marched to Reni. At this time, Sambat 1805, Bhím Singh, Thákur of Maháján who had been for so long alienated from his chief, was brought to do homage to Gaj Singh by some other thákurs of note. He was forgiven and presented a nazar of an elephant, named "Gokul Gaj," bestowed on him by Rájá Abhai Singh. He was then placed in possession of his estate.

The Maharájá was engaged in repressing the encroachments of certain thákurs when he was informed that the Ráwal of Jaisalmir had attacked Bhikampúr. On his way to its support news of the death at Ajmir of Rájá Abhai Singh arrived Asádh Punam 15th, Sambat 1805. Rám Singh, his successor, refused the nazar of his uncle Bakht Singh, because the latter

Gaj Singh again goes to sup- port Bakht Singh. held Nágor, and finding that Bakht Singh had no intention of evacuating it, Rám Singh marched a force against him, the Dúdáwats of Mertia being his chief supporters. On Bakht Singh's urgent application Gaj Singh brought 18,000 men to his aid; but Gaj Singh could not contend with Jodhpúr and Jaisalmir at once, and was compelled to withdraw his force

Bhikampúr lost to Bíkánír. from Bhikampúr, whereupon the Ráwal of Jaisal- mir occupied it and killed Kumbkaran as he in homage was touching the Ráwal's feet. Bhikampúr is now Jaisalmir ter- ritory.

In consequence of the absence of the Maharájá, disturbances arose in Tára Singh, brother of the Bíkánír, and Tára Singh, brother of Gaj Singh, Maharájá, killed when contend- ing with the Thákur of Bahá- drán. was sent to Reni to check Lál Singh of Bahádrán, who had taken to plundering. Tára Singh in a fight

was killed, together with a Ponwar, a parohit, and a Johiyá, all of some standing. His widow, who became satí with his corpse, was a daughter of the celebrated Shekháwat freebooter, Saledí Singh. Although Reni was occupied by Amar Singh of Bahádrán, the Maharájá still remained with Bakht Singh, who praised his staunchness in disregarding his own diffi- culties to serve a friend. A force mounted on camels was, however, at once sent off to Reni under Mahtá Manrúp and a son of the distinguished Khushál Singh. Except that Bakht Singh procured the murder of one of the chief Jodhpúr officers, the allies did little or nothing against Jodhpúr, and Isrí Singh, Rájá of Jaipúr, after a time interposed between the Jodhpúr chief and his uncle.

A Jaipúr force, under one Thákur Dalel Singh, marched into Jodhpúr, and Jaipúr interposes and causes Dalel Singh in conjunction with Mahtá Bakhtá- Bakht Singh to come to terms war, the Bíkánír agent with Bakht Singh negoti- ated terms of peace, by which it was decided that with his nephew Rám Singh, Bakht Singh should give up Jálór, which he Rájá of Jodhpúr. occupied, and receive an equivalent in Ajmir, besides three lakhs as compensation

for money expended on the fortification of Jálór, which was not to be surrendered till the money was paid. Matters being thus pleasantly settled, Maharájá Gaj Singh had leisure for agreeable conversation with the Jaipúr representative Dálek Singh and his ally Bakht Singh. The former on the Maharájá questioning him related the circumstances of Sawái

Conversation between Gaj Singh and Bakht Singh. Jai Singh's rise and his connection with Ajit

Singh of Jodhpúr, and then Bakht Singh detailed how his family lost Jodhpúr, how it was recovered by his father Ajit Singh and how he himself was privy to the murder of his father in which crime his brother Abhai Singh was principle. Gaj Singh's comment on the narrative was: "Oh! you are no villain; you killed your father from love of your brother!"

On returning to his own territory Maharájá Gaj Singh had no difficulty in expelling the Bahádrán party from Reni and recovering his brother's baggage; while thus engaged, an urgent message from Bakht Singh arrived, begging that the Maharájá would rejoin him at

once as the imperial "bakhshi" or commander-in-chief from Dehli had come to aid him, and there was also a powerful confederacy of thákurs united against Rám Singh.* The Maharájá found the "Dhírāj" (Bakht Singh's Dehli title)

Gaj Singh has again to go to the support of Bakht Singh. at Mertiá, near which at Suriya-bás Bakht Singh and his supporters fought their first battle with Isri Singh of Jaipúr.

The fight was undecisive, and there was shortly after another battle at Pípará, rather bloody but equally inconclusive. At this juncture Isri Singh proposed to pair off with the Nawáb or Bakhshi aforesaid, whose connection with Bakht Singh was established when the former was on business at Jaipúr.

Accordingly, to the confusion of each party, they both marched off: Bakht Singh with Gaj Singh fell back on Nágór, and each side. Gaj Singh retreats the latter returned to his own territory, whence to Bíkánir. he was again summoned by the Dhírāj on the

death of Isri Singh which deprived Rájá Rám of his chief ally.

The Márwár thákurs, particularly he of Ahú, urged Bakht Singh now to strike for the "gadi," as the Mertiás alone of the great Márwár houses supported the Rájá. At the

Again joins Bakht Singh. Dudásar tank near Mertiá a great battle was fought Mangsir Bud 9th, Sambat 1807, in which Rám Singh was defeated, notwithstanding the gallantry of the Mertiás. Sher Singh, their chief, after the manner of Rápút chivalry, had

Defeat of Rám Singh, Bakht Singh's opponent. sent word to Bakht Singh of the time the attack would take place, telling him not to stick amongst his guns but to come and fight him in the open. Sher Singh fell in action together with many others of his devoted clan. A second battle proved no less unfortunate for Rám Singh, who had to retreat to Jodhpúr.

In the operations which followed, Bakht Singh out-manceuvred his antagonist, and in conjunction with Rájá Gaj Singh took

Capture of Jodhpúr by Bakht Singh allied with Gaj Singh. Jodhpúr, which for four "pahars" was given over to plunder; Asádh Súd 9th, Sambat 1808. The upper fort held by Bhátis was also surrendered to Bakht

Graceful acknowledgment by Bakht Singh of the services of his ally. Singh, who, as a graceful compliment, first placed Gaj Singh on the "gadi" before he finally occupied

it himself, since he owed, he said, all to his ally. "Rájá Rám Singh's mad habit of gratuitously insulting his followers is dwelt on by Colonel Tod. The only new insult mentioned in the Bíkánir "kiyánt" is his remark on the sons of Champá coming into his presence: "Champá (the beasts) have grazed."

Gaj Singh then returned to Bikanir, and soon went to Jaisalmir to be

Marriage of Gaj Singh at Jaisalmir. married to a daughter of the Ráwal. His friend Bakht Singh could not join the marriage party (ján) as he was expecting an attack, but Bijai Singh, his son, came. For once I will relate the marriage ceremonies in some detail.

At Sudásar, some distance from Jaisalmir, the Ráwal's agent met the

Details of the ceremonies, &c. Maharájá, whom he presented with a gold and a silver cocoanut and two horses with gold trappings.

On Mágh Sud 5th the parohit placed the "tilak" (rice and grains, &c.) on the brow of the Maharájá, who deposited Rs. 10 in the former's "tháli" and gave the same sum to the "sánis" (servants). Then he put on the "kesar" (safron-colored garment) and the "mor" (a bridegroom's head ornament), and went to be married during the last watch of the day. The Ráwal came to meet him, and they saluted without alighting from their elephants. "Sahelis" (personal attendants of a lady) stood with a "kalas" at the fort gate into which the Maharájá put Rs. 5. Before he seated himself in the "khássa" (ornamental sedan chair) "sahelis" rubbed him with "pithi" (a compound of perfume oil, flour, &c.), and received Rs. 5. He was then carried to the upper palace, where he touched the "toran" and entered at the time of the return of the cattle from grazing (dusk).

The marriage ceremony then took place: the lady's name was Chánd Kaur, her father's Abhai Singh, Ráwal of Jaisalmir. Among those who came to congratulate the Maharájá was an envoy of the Mián of Lattí (an Amir of Sindh). The "kiyánt" goes on to tell of the visits made by and paid to the Maharájá, and of entertainments given by the Ráwal and others, but the account contains little beyond lists of formal presents and precedence. There seems to have been but one grand dinner (got), and at an entertainment in Bijai Singh's tents the guests were but one hundred. The Ráwal, however, distributed to the whole gathering uncooked food for four days and cooked for one. Before leaving Jaisalmir Gaj Singh caused some of his principal thákurs to marry Jaisalmir ladies, and he paid visits to the principal shrines. The chief is the "Thákur" in the fort, or image of Sri Krishn, the reputed ancestor of the Bhatí chief who claims to be the head of the Lunar race. The shrine of Keter Pál or Bhairúji is another of consequence. Gaj Singh on leaving Jaisalmir proceeded to Pokaran with Bijai Singh, accompanied by the agent of the Sindh Mián.

It is not necessary to detail the visits and entertainments exchanged

Gaj Singh compels a thákur to marry an illegitimate half-sister of Bakht Singh. before they all separated at Pokaran, or the civilities the Maharájá met with from thákurs on his way back to Bikanir. When at Philodí he caused a Bhatí thákur to marry an illegitimate half-sister of Bakht Singh, a kind of enforced misalliance which in the present day so often estranges thákurs from their chiefs.

On the Maharájá's return to Bikanir he dismissed the Mahtás from office, appointing in their place their rivals the Múndrás. Both are sections of the Mahesri caste.

In Sambat 1809, aided by the Nawáb of Daulatpúra who joined him by order of Bakht Singh, the Maharájá destroyed the Sikar village of Seodrah which harbored plunderers.

Gaj Singh punishes a marauding Sikar village. Soon afterwards he had again to enter Jodhpúr territory to assist his ally against Rám Singh, who had come to Ajmir with a Marhatta army. The invading force,

Gaj Singh goes to support Bakht Singh again.

however, retreated without fighting, and after doing homage to the Hindu Worships at the Hindu shrine at Pokhar and to the Muhammadan at Pokhar and the Muham- Ajmír Gaj Singh came home. The "nachrol" madan at Ajmír. (wave offering) presents, &c., interchanged on the occasions of the two chiefs coming in contact are detailed in the kiyánt, but it can serve no useful purpose to specify them in full.

This year, Bhadon Búd 13th, Sambat 1809, Bakht Singh died to the great Death of Bakht Singh and grief of Gaj Singh, who at once recognised his son Bijai Singh as his successor. The death was followed by a marriage between Gaj Singh's son and

Mahtás recover office. a Shekháwat lady, in arranging which the Mahtá figures, and perhaps in consequence of it recovered the office of diwán on payment to the Darbár of two lákhs of rupees. The diwán's pay was fixed at Rs. 14,000 a year and perquisites.

At this time one Sobhá Kumhár and Deví Súnár gave information regarding the existence of a copper mine near Bídásar, which laborers (beldárs) were sent to work, with, I believe, no great result; at least, the mine is now neglected.

The next incident recorded is the presentation to the Mahárájá by Cháran Gopinath Gádan of a work called the "Grunth Ráj," for which he received Rs. 2,000 in cash, a female elephant, two horses, a "sirpáo" (suit of clothes), and a pearl necklace, considered the equivalent of a "lákhs pusáo."

The revenue of the Puniá pargana (that of Rájgarh) is mentioned as yielding Rs. 55,000 at this period, Sambat 1809; and Hissár uncontrollable from Dehli was assigned

to Bikanír by the emperor and occupied by Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh, who, however, was soon sent to Dehli to aid the emperor against the rebellious Wazír Mansúr Ali Khán. He was received with distinction in Kátik Sambat 1809 (1752), admitted to the presence,* and received for his master a mansab

of Rs. 7,000, together with a magnificent "khillat."

Title conferred on the rájá The Mahárájá received the title "Sri Ráj Rájeswar and on the Mahtá. Mahárájá Dhiráj Mahárájá Síroman Gaj Singh,"

and this was engraved on the ráj seal. To the Mahárájá's eldest son a mansab of Rs. 4,000 was granted, and Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh was created a Ráo and received an appropriate khillat. Khillats were also bestowed upon the other Bikanír officers. At Hissár, when the Mahárájá came, a grand darbár

was held to receive the imperial gifts and honors in due form. An elephant with huge tusks is mentioned in the "kiyánt" as the most remarkable of the presents, and the sanad of the mansab is transcribed in full.

A Jodhpúr force of 50,000 was associated with that of Bikanír at Hissár, and the rebellion of Mansúr Ali allied with the Ját Súra Maj is stated to have been suppressed,

though the Ráthor troops at Hissár, do not appear to have been actively engaged against them. When at Hissár Gaj Singh was once more summoned to Jodhpúr to assist in resisting Rám Singh, who again had appeared with a Marhatta force. Gaj Singh

marched at once, together with 4,000 of the Jodhpúr body-guard ("choki nibes or khass"), which

* He presented 101 gold-mohurs on behalf of the Mahárájá and 11 "on his own, and each sardár gave one."

with a bhandárf, a parohit, and two thákurs of note were with the Mahárájá's troops at Hissár. Mahtá Raghúnáth and a Dwárkáni baniá were left behind, and Mahtá Bhím Singh and a parohit were ordered to join the Mahárájá at

Gaj Singh meets Bijai Singh, Nágor with a force from Bíkánír. Gaj Singh pro-
ceeded to Mertiá, where at the suggestion of a

Jodhpúr thákur he put on mourning (a white pagri, &c.) to meet Bijai Singh, as they had not met since the death of the latter's father. Rám Singh was diverted from Jodhpúr for a time, and Gaj Singh hearing that Hissár was being overrun by his foes was anxious to return to his own territory. But Bijai besought him to wait till the danger to Jodhpúr from Rám Singh's Marhatta host was overpast, promising that Hissár should be re-occupied afterwards by their united forces. Accordingly Gaj Singh withdrew his garrison and established it within present Bíkánír limits, where it took "peshkash" from the Suirán pargana of Hissár and destroyed the contumacious Ját village of Mándlot. The Bíkánír chief had remained six months at Mertiá, during which the daughter of the Siróhi Ráo came (dolá) to be married to him. At length the Marhatta host approached, the Mertiás in the van. Gaj Singh, who had increased his force to the utmost (and amongst his allies had Kámyáb Khán Káimkháni, ex-Nawáb of Fatahpúr in Shekháwát) mustered but 40,000; Bijai Singh had 70,000 and their ally Bahádúr Singh, Chief of Kishangarh, had 5,000 total 115,000; while Rám Singh's forces and allies were more than double that number. The armies came into collision at Gangaram, after three attacks the invaders fell back seven kos to village Chorásan. The Márwár

Great battle at Ganganara
and Chorásan; Rám Singh victo-
rious.

thákurs then urged Bijai Singh to force a general action; as success, they thought, was certain.

Accordingly Asoj Súd 13 the battle was fought. "Who shall describe the fight? Such war Ráthors alone can make, but numbers prevailed and the three chiefs were defeated." Of the Bíkánír force fifteen men of note fell (amongst them the Káimkháni Nawáb). The Kishangarh chief went home. Bijai Singh retreated on Nágor and requested Gaj Singh to return to Bíkánír, and from

thence send him supplies for a siege. Jodhpúr and
Bijai Singh and Gaj Singh Nágor were besieged simultaneously, and Sadáu,
retreat. the post on the Hissár border, was attacked by a
Bilúch, whom, however, Bhím Singh, the commandant, repulsed. Bijai Singh

Jodhpúr and Nágor besieged sent from Nágor to Udepúr for help, and the Ráná
by Rám Singh and the Mar- despatched a sardár to act as mediator who en-
hattas. camped outside the besieging force. It is not

necessary to detail the "kiyánt's" account of the failure of the envoy's negotiations, the murder of Appá Sáhib by Bijai Singh's assassins, the slaughter of the Udepúr envoy by the Marhattas who suspected him of having caused their leader's death: all this is to be found in Colonel Tod's annals. At length Mádhó Singh, Rájá of Jaipúr, resolved to join Bíkánír and to assist Bijai Singh. Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh was sent with the Bíkánír force, which joined the Jaipúr detachment at Dídwaná. But there they were kept in check by a body of Marhattas, and the siege was not raised; it continued for fourteen months, when Bijai Singh was urged by his followers to leave the fort which was well supplied, make his way through the lines of the besiegers, and hasten to Bíkánír, where arrangements for the relief

Bijai Singh leaves Nágor to get
aid from Bíkánír or elsewhere.

of Nágor might be made. Bijai Singh with
1,000 horse escaped from Nágor by night, and in
thirtysix hours was at Deshnuk. That day Kátik

Súd 4, Sambat 1811, the news reached Bikanér and ample arrangements were at once made for the comfort and honorable reception of Bijai, who had come provided with nothing but cold food (*sirāoni*). After the "peshwái" and the feasting, distribution of food to followers, and visits to temples, Cháran Gopináth, before mentioned as a literary character, was sent to Deshnuk

Aid of Karníji besought. to consult Karníji with respect to Bijai Singh's prospects. His naive prayer was as follows:—

"Mother ! if thou wilt restore Jodhpúr to Bijai Singh, he will restore to thee those forty-two villages of "sásan" (religious grant) in Nágór which Bakht Singh, his father, confiscated, and he will lay the deed of grant at thy feet."

Having thus prayed, the Cháran observed an omen by means of grains of corn. The practice is to throw down a quantity promiscuously and then

Karníji propitious.

to count them; if the number proves odd, the

The chiefs go to Jaipúr.

omen is propitious; if even, the contrary. On this

occasion the mother manifested her favor through the grains (*akho*). The two chiefs then resolved to go to Jaipúr, and if possible, obtain aid from Rájá Mádhó Singh.

All the entertainments and civilities they met with on their way to Jaipúr, and the particulars of their reception, are recorded in the "kíyánt," but are not worth detailing.

When they were visiting the Jaipúr chief in his palace, Rájá Gopál Singh,

Mention of Gopál Singh, the famous chief of Karauli.

the famous chief of Karauli, was announced. The

Rájás advanced to meet him, and he was conducted to a seat in front of the other chiefs in order that he should not have to sit below any of them. Mádhó Singh then

Entertainments at Jaipúr.

took all his guests to worship at Govind Deo's temple in a beautiful garden, where they saw

fountains play and afterwards there were elephant and buffalo fights. On another day Mádhó Singh exhibited a palace he was building; then the Bundí Rájá arrived at Jaipúr, and a son was born to Mádhó Singh, both of which events entailed visits, offering of presents, and postponement of the business which filled the Ráthor visitors with anxiety. Gaj Singh at length took an opportunity, while remarking on the splendor of their reception, of drawing attention to Bijai Singh's anxiety about his besieged fort. But the Jaipúr chief showed no disposition to discuss matters seriously, and the two suppliant Rájás at last lost patience and Mahtá Bhim Singh and others were sent to press for a decided answer as to whether Jaipúr would give aid or not. One Harihar, a Bengálí, and a prominent character at Jaipúr, replied

Mádhó Singh, Rájá of Jaipúr, indisposed to help Bijai Singh.

on behalf of Mahárájá Mádhó Singh, that two

rupees would not cover the cost of a horse and man, that if he aided Bijai Singh he would have to fight the Dakhanís afterwards, and that his expenses would not be under a "karor," and this sum must be paid by Bijai Singh beforehand. On receiving this reply Gaj Singh and Bijai Singh resolved to waste no more time at Jaipúr, and they went to take leave of their host. After their reception Rájá Mádhó took Gaj Singh aside, and after dwelling upon the long friendship which had existed between the houses of Jaipúr and Bikanér and his desire

Treachery of the Jaipur chief.

to restore to Bikanér the eighty-four villages of

Philodí which Ajít Singh of Jodhpúr had annexed, proposed that Bijai Singh should be confined or killed. Gaj Singh replied that he could not play Bijai Singh false and held to his resolution, notwithstanding all that the Jaipúr chief could urge. Even when Mádhó Singh pressed him to stay at Jaipúr to arrange a marriage, Gaj Singh said he must

first see Bijai Singh safe across the boundary. The Jaipur chief, saying he must go and talk to Bijai Singh, then left Gaj Singh, who however sent two of his attendant thakurs (Pem Singh and Hathi Singh) to prevent treachery. It so happened that one of Bijai Singh's followers, the Thakur of Raiyan, was connected with the Nuthawat thakur of Jaipur, whose wife warned him of his master's danger in order that he might avoid being involved in it. The Raiyan thakur hurried to tell Bijai Singh, and reached him when in darbar with Madho Singh. The latter had just placed his "janeo" on

his ear and risen, saying that he must go and make water, but at that moment the two Bikanir thakurs above-mentioned laid hands on his girdle

and said: "Maharaja, be pleased to remain seated, we have apprehensions." The Jaipur people were about to attack the Jodhpuris whom the Raiyan thakur now warned, when Madho Singh forbade them, and Bijai Singh, at the suggestion of the two Bikanir thakurs, withdrew, joined Gaj Singh, and they both returned to their camp, Pem Singh and Hathi Singh remaining behind to apologize and give up their swords to Madho Singh, whom they declared they honored as their master. They readily obtained the forgiveness of Madho Singh, who permitted the two chiefs to depart on hostages being given for the performance of Gaj Singh's promise to return after seeing Bijai across the boundary. They went to Reni in Bikanir, where news arrived that the siege of Nagor had been abandoned on engagement for

Sieges of Nagor and Jodhpur the payment of twenty lakhs being made. Jodhpur raised.

was also restored, and Bijai Singh on returning to his capital sent, as promised, to the temple of Karnaji at Deshnuk the sanads for the forty-two villages resumed by his father, and a lakh and a quarter in cash besides.

Gaj Singh returned to Jaipur, and on his way their ousted the Thakur of Gaj Singh's marriages in Jaipur. Sathku, with whom he was displeased, and bestowed his estate on the brave Thakur Pem Singh. On

the Raja's reaching Jaipur a Kanthriya* Brahman brought the cocoanut of betrothal on the part of Fatah Kaur the daughter of Raja Jetsi Rajawat of Kamba. The "kiyant" details at length the presents exchanged, the gratuities given to Brahmins and servants, the offerings to temples,† and other incidents involving expenditure, of which the most notable was the manufacture of a "mor" or bridegroom's crown for Gaj Singh costing Rs. 20,000. The marriage took place Phagan Sud 6, Sambat 1812. Raja Madho Singh himself entered the "chauri" or "mandhap" (space under the wedding canopy), and with his own hands did what was proper as told by the Brahmins who sat outside the curtain. Offerings to temples, scattering of money among the people, banquets and fireworks, followed the ceremony as usual, and four days afterwards the bride's dowry was exhibited to Gaj Singh and his bride, who sat tied together before the "chauri," where all the jewels and garments, valued at

Festivities. Rs. 10,000, were placed. Then came a pig-hunt and the Holi festival, at which the two chiefs flung red powder (gulal) at one another and visited the gardens‡ and palaces of Jaipur. Gaj Singh made inquiries regarding the plan and construction of the city, and was told that one Vidyadhar, a Bengali, laid it out, and that it took four

*The Kanthriya Brahmins are the parohits of the Kachwahs, as the Siwara Brahmins are the parohits of the Rathors, and Chobes the parohits of the Jadus.

†Amongst others, to the temple of Nagniji, the "Kuldevi" (clan god) of the Rathors and Sesodias, as Jamuwa is the "Kuldevi" of the Kachwahs, and Anjani of the Jadus.

‡The Jai niwas gardens and fountains particularly spoken of.

years to build. Vidyádhara received the title of "Biswa Karma" (the name of the architect of the gods), a designation Gaj Singh declared deserved. Then came the Gangor festival (Chet Sud 3), and the two chiefs went together to the fair held on that occasion, and a series of usual entertainments followed.

On Jaith Sud 11 Gaj Singh contracted a second marriage; the lady was Phul Kaur, daughter of the Thákur of Jhiláyá; Mádhó Singh again took part in the wedding. Before he left Jaipur the Maharájá visited the temples of Sallá Devi at Amer and Gokálnáth, &c., received congratulations from the vakils of Surájmál, the famous Ját, and exchanged visits with Rájá Gopál of Karauli.

On his way back to Bikanír, which he reached in the middle of Asoj, the Maharájá got a boundary dispute with the Shekháwats settled, and destroyed the village and wells of Sadán belonging to the chaudhri of the Puniyá Játs as he had been plundering the ryots. When Gaj Singh entered the fort his sister performed the rite of "arati."*

The year Gaj Singh was at Jaipur (Sambat 1812) was one of great famine in Bikanír; relief works. the Maharájá sent Mahtá Bhím Singh with two other officials to Bikanír to arrange for a daily distribution of food (sadá bart); the city wall (shahr panáh) too was built this year, and must have employed many people; it altered the site of the main gate, which hitherto had been near the Bakhtáwar Sagar well. Another work of Gaj Singh's was the "Phul Mahal" or flower palace at Bikanír, which was built by a Jaipur architect (kárigar) sent for by the Maharájá.

After the visit to Jaipur the Bidáwats, who up to that time had paid but a loose allegiance, began to serve Gaj Singh, and other refractory thákurs and the grandsons of the Johiyá Málá before-mentioned had to present "peshkash."

In Sambat 1813, Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh was supplanted in the diwángi by Mahtá Pirthi Singh, and a force under one of the Mahtás was sent against the Sikhs who were plundering in the Nohar pargana. Another force, assisted by Shekháwat Nawal Singh, the founder of Nawalgarh in Shekháwatí, was sent against Bahádrán, the thákur of which, Lál Singh, had to yield; but frightened by omens he refused to come to do homage, and all the force which could be mustered was led against him by the Maharájá in person. The chief stand was made by one of Lál Singh's forts, Dungaráná, which was bombarded and then assaulted by the Darbár troops. It is worth noticing that the most prominent of the Bikanír stormers

A baniá, a kayath, and a were a Mahtá of a baniá caste, a kayath or writer, eunuch prominent in the as- and a eunuch, none of whom one would expect to find assaulting a fort. The Shekháwat allies

seem to have fought well, and Nawal Singh brought to the Maharájá the head of the Dungaráná thákur, whose people were nearly all killed. Large stores of grain were taken to another village, and Lál Singh at length submitted and was presented by Nawal Singh Shekháwat to the Maharájá, whom he called

his master and god and by whom he was forgiven. Ráwatsar was next attacked and a "peshkash" of Rs. 25,000 levied through Shekháwat Nawal Singh, who had now obtained

* A lotá with cotton tied round. It is waved round the head of a returned bridegroom by a female relation, who receives money in the lotá (Rs. 250 on this occasion).

great influence in Bikánir affairs, and by his instrumentality Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh on payment of two lákhs on account of embezzlement during his former term of office was restored to the diwání. But as at this time

Sale of offices. news of the death of his relation Mahtá Raghúnáth Singh arrived, the Mahárájá paid him a visit of condolence, and in consideration of the valuable services of his deceased relative, remitted Rs. 50,000 of the fine and spoke kindly to him. The sale of the killadári for Rs. 4,000 is mentioned as having occurred in Sambat 1817.

Between Sambat 1840 and 1870 the fort of Nohar on the present Hissár border was built, for Hissár or part of it was at that time claimed as a part of the Bikánir territory. At

Fort of Nohar built. Nohar the ceremony of investing Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh with the office of diwán took place. The Mahárájá placed the "tilak" on Bakhtáwar Singh's forehead with his

Family of Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh; its honors. own hand, and remarked that his family was a loyal one. The "kiyánt" adds that Mahárájá Súr Singh in Sambat 1680 had in like manner placed the "tilak" on the forehead of Bakhtáwar Singh's ancestor, and Mahárájá Sarup Singh at Lalpúra in the Dakhan had in Sambat 1756 given the "tiko" or "tilak" to Mahtá Mukúnd Rái of the same family, the importance of which the kiyánt writer is interested in making the most of.

At this period, although the emperors were unable to compel the personal attendance of chiefs, Bikánir had not thrown off allegiance to Dehli, as appears from the fact of a fine having been imposed and hostages for its pay-

Fine imposed by Dehli Emperor. ment having been taken in consequence of the Mahárájá's failure to come to the Emperor on the latter's visiting Sirsá. A messenger from Delhi came to demand the money and actually obtained Rs. 7,000.

From Jodhpúr envoys came to ask for pecuniary assistance, as in consequence of the late war the state was in great

Money given to Jodhpúr. difficulty. Gaj Singh sent Rs. 50,000, remarking that if Jodhpúr wanted him as well as money, he was ready to sacrifice himself.

In Sambat 1816 the Mahárájá at Bidásar organised operations for working the copper mine before-mentioned as discovered in that neighbourhood, and he took the opportunity of imposing a tax or "bachh" on the Bidáwats; and his assistance being again required in Jodhpúr, he went to

Tax imposed on Bidáwats. Gaj Singh goes to Márwár again. Kiúsar in Márwár, to meet Bijai Singh, to whom he induced Zoráwar Singh, the refractory thákur of Kiúsar, to do homage. The "kiyánt" here gives an account of Bijai Singh's quarrels with his thákurs, which differs somewhat from Colonel Tods, but it is not necessary that I should detail it, as it belongs to Jodhpúr history. I have likewise left unnoticed several domestic occurrences of this time recorded in the "kiyánt" which have no particular interest.

In Sambat 1817 the Mahájan estate, which had been "khálist" for two years after the death of Bhím Singh, was divided between two members of the family. At Chúrú,

Division of Mahájan estates. where the Mahárájá encamped, Nawal Singh Shekháwat visited him and was received with distinction; indeed, he seems to have exercised much influence in Bikánir for years. At Chúrú also an envoy arrived from Ghúlám Sháh of Lattí in Sindh to arrange an

Nawal Singh and envoy from Lattira visit the Mahárájá at Chúrú.

* Called "akha" (a pearl).

exchange of turbans between the Mián's son and Ráj Singh, son of Gaj Singh. It appears that Gaj Singh and the Mián had previously exchanged turbans, as also had their respective fathers in Sambat 1798.

The Bhattis and Johiyás to the north were troublesome in 1816 and 1817.

Bhattis and Johiyás aggressive in the north; they are checked by Bikanir troops, aided by a Jodhpur and Latti contingent.

Hassan Muhammad, a Bhati leader, took Bhatner, but soon yielded. One Dáúd seized Anúpgarh, and the Mahárájá sent a force, accompanied by a contingent from Jodhpur, against the aggressors. Mián Ghulám of Latti above-mentioned likewise gave aid.

Anúpgarh was soon recovered, and Maujgarh was also taken by assault. A Johiyá of rank, Hanyo by name, was taken prisoner and brought to Bikanir, where the Mahárájá treated him with distinction and gave him the Jaimalsar estate, but he was compelled to reside at Bikanir until some time after, when the Johiyás began to accept service.

In Sambat 1818 the Púgal Ráo for murdering his "kamdár" was ousted in favor of his son, who however had to pay

Púgal and Ráwatsar thákurs punished for murder and robbery.

"peshkash" for it, and in Sambat 1819 the Mahárájá took the field against the Ráwat of Ráwatsar, whom he compelled to restore the goods he had

plundered and to pay a "peshkash".

In Bhádon Sambat 1820 the Mahtá Bhakhtáwar Singh was removed from the díwání, which on the Janam Ashtmi was conferred on Sahmal Chand, Bardiyá.

Changes of officials.

At this time it was discovered that the Dáúd Putras were building a town at Bullar (not far from Anúpgarh), and that one Ikhtiyár Khán of the same tribe had surprised Nohar Kot in Jaisalmir. Accordingly Sáh Múl Chand and the Thákur of Sándwa, Dhiraj Singh, were sent with 10,000 men to Anúpgarh, where the Dáúd Putras and Johiyás with them came to negotiate. The Bikanir party insisted on the Johiyás evacuating Bullar, which the latter held and which they begged they might be allowed to retain under "patta" or lease from the Bikanir darbár, and on condition that they paid "peshkash"

Bikanir forces contending with the Johiyás and Dáúd Putras meet with a reverse.

and did service; the discussion became warm, and at length the Johiyás withdrew and resolved to fight. The darbár force despising its foe, which was but 3,000 strong, was careless, and when early

the next morning the Johiyás fell upon them, they had to fly into the fort with the loss of their leader Dhiraj Singh and others, who fell fighting, besides some killed flying. Their camp was plundered, and the Johiyás resumed the negotiations, dwelling on the moderation of their former proposals which they renewed. Sáh Múl Chand presented a riding horse to the leading Johiyá, had an interview with him, and accepted his terms.

In Sambat 1821 the cocoanut of betrothal was sent on the part of Gaj Singh's daughter betrothed to son of Jaipur chief.

Sringot thákurs resent the execution of a murderer.

of Madho Singh of Jaipur. This year the Sringot thákurs and others were disorderly, and had only half submitted when the execution of a refugee murderer whom they had surrendered to the darbár excited their anger and they again rose. The Johiyás at Bullar, however, behaved better, for they this year sent a

nazar of Rs. 9,000 and begged and received forgiveness for what had occurred the year before.

In Sambat 1822, through the intervention of a Parihár and a parohit, Purchase of offices by Ráo the Mahtá Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh obtained the Babhtáwar Singh add Múl díwángi on payment of a lákh of rupees, and the Chand.

unsuccessful Múl Chánd on presenting a nazar of Rs. 2,000 received instead the "mandí" or administration of the customs on goods brought to the city market. This year the Mahárájá determined to build

State of Rájgarh determined. a town in memory of his son Ráj Singh, who had died, and the site of Rájgarh was fixed on by Gaj Singh himself, who visited the spot. The Juhar Rájputs came to plunder in the neighbourhood of

Plunderers. Bukarkho, and a thákur was fined Rs. 2,000 for harbouring them.

About this time a messenger from Rájá Mádhó Singh of Jaipúr brought new of the alliance at Pokhar between the Játs and Bijai Singh of Jodhpúr, and of Mádhó Singh's intention to fight them if they passed through his territory. At the same time word from Bijai Singh to the same effect arrived. Gaj Singh replied to Bijai Singh, who urged him to join the

Contest between Jaipúr and the Játs allied with Jodhpúr alliance, that he was surprised at his having entered on so important a war without consulting him, his friend, and that he meant to act in concert with Mádhó Singh for once, but would nevertheless not neglect the interests of Bijai Singh.

Gaj Singh inclined to favor Jaipúr In Sambat 1823 Gaj Singh was again at Chúrú (encamping near the

Battle of Máondá. Sigro well), apparently on his way to Jaipúr, where Mádhó Singh besought him to hasten to his aid. There news of the great battle between the Kachhwáhs and Játs, and the defeat of the latter at Máondá, arrived, and Bijai Singh renewed his entreaties that Gaj Singh would join him. Mádhó Singh too repeated his, and sent a Bengáli, one Kishen Datt, with a present of Rs. 24,000 and some fighting buffaloes and deer to press the point. Gaj Singh, however, hesitated until

Death of the Jaipúr chief. Phágan 14th, when news of Mádhó Singh's death arrived, and then sending a re-assuring message to Jaipúr, he sent off for Jodhpúr. He visited his friend the Kítasar thákur (whom he had reconciled with his chief) en route, and met Bijai Singh at Mertiá, but soon returned to Bikanír.

In Sambat 1825 Kamr-ul-din Johiyá was commissioned by the Mahárájá to retake Sirsá and Fatiábád. A "nagará" and An expedition sent against Sirsá and Fatiábád. "nishán" (kettle-drum and banner) in addition to the usual "saropáos" were conferred upon him

Marriage of the Jaipúr Rájá Pirthí Singh to a daughter of Gaj Singh. in darbár, and with him was associated Mahtá Jet Rúp. The expedition was successful. The same

year the young Rájá Pirthí Singh of Jaipúr came to Bikanír to be married to Gaj Singh's grand-daughter, Sardár Kaur. On the part of Jaipúr Kishan Dás Ojhá came to Bikanír to arrange matters, and Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh was sent to Jaipúr. He went *viá* Kishangarh, where he arranged another marriage, and where the Mahárájá is said to have treated him with great honor, advancing four paces to receive him. At Jaipúr he likewise is stated to have met with much attention, the details of which I will omit. Apprehensions at Jaipúr were entertained that the Jaipúr "ján" or marriage party would find a deficiency of water in Bikanír. But the arrangements were so good that the Jaipúr people found to their astonishment unlimited supplies in the villages they passed. Mahárájá Gaj

Singh came to Devi Sagar tank, a kos from Bikanir, to meet the party, which

Partab Singh of Macheri the encamped at the Anup Sagar tank. The principal chief thakur with the marriage thakur with the young Raja was the famous party.

Partab Singh of Macheri, the founder of the Alwar State, who had recently distinguished himself in the great battle of Maondá.

The importance attached to the most trivial incidents on these occasions is illustrated by the fact of the "kiyánt's" recording that on the customary visit to the temples, Pirthi Singh, who was a child of ten years old, fell asleep in the Maharaja's lap and broke his pearl necklace. Gaj Singh, instructed by two Brahmins, performed the usual marriage ceremony, and he himself composed the song (banrá) sung in honor of the bridegroom, which song is still sung in Bikanir.

The bride's dowry consisted of 1 elephant, 20 horses, 6 raths ornaments worth a lakh of rupees, and clothes in proportion. The whole cost of the marriage was four lakhs. As representing the family of the bride's mother, Naval Singh Shekhawat gave wedding presents to the value of Rs. 50,000; Rs. 4,000 were presented by the Champawats of Jodhpur, and Rs. 2,500 by Kishangarh. Among the guests was Mian Ghulam of Latti and Zorawar Singh of Kiusar both of whom have been already mentioned. Charans received from Gaj Singh a lakh of rupees (tiág), and Rs. 30,000 were distributed by Jaipur. The bride unfortunately died shortly after the marriage, when Gaj Singh was at Nathdwara.

After the marriage Bijai Singh of Jodhpur invited Gaj Singh to ac-

Gaj Singh meets Bijai Singh company him to Nathdwara, the famous temple of Jodhpur and the chiefs of Sri Krishn.* The question of the pargana of Mewar and Kishangarh at Godwar taken by Jodhpur from Mewar was then under discussion, and as the Rana of Mewar

expected to benefit by the mediation of Gaj Singh, he too urged him to come. After consulting Karniji the Maharaja set off to Nathdwara, where, anxious to influence the affairs of Mewar, he remained four months. With him were the chiefs of Jodhpur and Kishangarh, and each of them presented Rs. 4,000 to the shrine. Whilst there Gaj Singh had many discussions on religion and history with the gosain and Bijai Singh, whom he astonished by his learning. The gosain related to him the origin of Balba Acharaj, the founder of the sect, of which Nathdwara is the chief temple. Rana Arsiji from Udepur joined the chiefs at Nathdwara. The Rana begged Gaj Singh to help him to arrange his difficulties with his nobles and Bijai Singh. Gaj Singh did his best to get Bijai to act in concert with him, but Bijai did not wish the anarchy which then prevailed in Mewar to cease, as it strengthened his hold on Godwar and both the Rana and the Kishangarh chief told Gaj Singh

Negotiations about Godwar.

that it was useless his incurring further trouble and expense by remaining at Nathdwara in hopes of prevailing with the Jodhpur chief. Gaj Singh was convinced of the truth of this, but he resolved on a last effort to induce Bijai Singh to give up Godwar, and with that object he arranged to visit the temple with him, where the Rana by previous agreement also came. Gaj Singh on meeting Bijai in the presence of the Rana again urged him to restore Godwar, and when he failed the gosain of the temple told Bijai that it was the command (agya)

* Though not mentioned in the "kiyánt," it appears from Tod that the occasion was the great "Anakuta" festival. For some remarks on the meeting of the Rajas and their offerings, vide Tod, Vol. I, page 547.

of the deity that he should comply. The Jodhpúr chief thus pressed, turned to his followers and said : " Well, the Ráná must have your pargana," whereupon Zoráwar Singh of Kúsar, always forward, and perhaps perceiving that his master wanted support, exclaimed : " Hear ye nobles of Márwár, Godwár is not Bijai Singh's to give; he is indeed lord of the Ráthors (panch Ráthorán-ka-dhani), but not of the land; that you must get from us, and we will die before we part with it, and you will die before you get it." This speech settled the matter and the chiefs parted. Gaj Singh now proposed

Gaj Singh gives aid both to Mewár and Márwár. to go home, but before leaving he did both to the Ráná and Bijai Singh a good turn. The former

asked him for assistance in paying the tribute (rozíná) due to the Marhattas, and Gaj Singh with a civil speech gave him Rs. 10,000. Bijai Singh was embarrassed by the outlaw Thákur of Riya who wasted the country, but whom Gaj Singh on pledging his safety, induced to come to his master. On the Mahárájá's farewell visit to the gosáin of Náthdwára, the latter fastened on his head a turban (" chíro "), and

Farewell visit to the gosáin. gave him a suit of clothes (" saropáo ") blessed by having been put on the image, and addressed him saying : " There is great reward in devotion (' bhagat bháo '), in religious disposition (' dharm nashtá '), and in liberality (' udár chit '). " He exhorted Gaj Singh to be observant of the service of Vishnu, blessed him, and told him to give the Bráhmans of the temple the same amount of money (" dakhná ") which the Ráo of Kotah had given, and added that his blessing on Gaj Singh would have effect for generations. Gaj Singh after marrying a Sesodiá lady at Amet returned home accompanied by the turbulent Thákur

Plunderers in Bikanír. of Riyan, for whose safety he had made himself responsible. Plundering was as usual rife in Bikanír. The Ráwatsar Thákur, confined for plundering, had escaped and returned to his former ways. A darbár force under Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh readily took Tekhrá, the stronghold of the robbers, all of whom to the number of 60 were put to the sword. The same force exacted peshkash from the Máldots of Baru.

In Sambat 1830 the Bhátis again revolted but yielded to force, Hassan Bhátis chastised. Khán paying Rs. 40,000 and engaging that half the rent of his lands should be annually sent to the darbár.

In Sambat 1832 Ráj Singh, the Mahárájá's eldest surviving son, instigated by Ráo Mahtá Bakhtáwar Singh, rebelled, and for the last 12 years of his father's life gave much trouble. The Ráo had a difference with his sons and their mother, and by way of mortifying the latter refused to allow her to take part* in the opining ceremony (" pritishta ") which was to follow the completion of a public well which he had built. Her sons, much offended, induced the Mahárájá to insist on the Ráo's associating his wife with him at the ceremony, and this pressure Bakhtáwar Singh resented, so that he intrigued against the chief. He did not openly join Kanwar Ráj Singh, who was supported by Nawal Singh Shekháwat, a Bhatí " faujdar, " a Cháran, a Bídá-wat, and the Thákur of Chúrú, Hari Singh. All of these soon abandoned the Kanwar except Hari Singh, who accompanied the Kanwar to the sanctuary of Deshnuk, where Ráj Singh remained in security for five years.

*On occasions of this kind the benefactor's wife should be attached to him by a band (" ghatjori "), otherwise the act of charity loses much of its virtue.

In Sambat 1836 Ráo Bakhtáwar Singh died (probably he was poisoned),

Death of Ráo Bakhtáwar and was succeeded in office by Mahtá Sarúp Singh. Sarúp Singh, his successor. Sarúp Singh had an enemy in one Sánwant Singh.

Maheśrí, a Kotháří, who told the Mahárájá that the Mahtá sent secret reports of matters at Bíkánír to Ráj Singh, at Deshnuk. This reached the ears of Ráj Singh, who contradicted it, and thenceforth planned the destruction of Sánwant Singh. One evening the Kotháří was riding on a camel from the palace to his home in the city accompanied by a Máli, one Bháni, when horsemen attacked him. He urged on the camel, but at the city gate a horseman brought down the camel with a sword-cut, and alighting killed both the Kotháří and Máli.

Murder.

He then cut off the Kotháří's head and, mounting behind a comrade,—for his own horse had galloped off to the darbár stable,—they returned to Deshnuk.

The Mahárájá thought Sánwant had met with his deserts, but he pitied the máli, and the "chhatrí" known as the "Sánwant Bháni" was built to their memory. In Sambat 1838 Kanwar Ráj Singh went to Jodhpúr, where he was well received by Bijai Singh, with whom however Gaj Singh took care to remain on the best of terms. The following is an instance of Gáj Singh's friendliness to Bijai Singh.

It will be remembered that in Suján Singh's time the Sánkla killádar of Bíkánír, the descendant of Nápa, the seer, had intrigued with Bakht Singh "Dhiráj," and planned to betray to him the Bíkánír fort. With him had been leagued Gordhan Dás, parohit, who fled to Nágor and received two villages from Bakht Singh, and in Bijai Singh's time the command of the Nágor fort. He now proposed to betray Nágor and its 555 villages to Gaj Singh if his old offences were pardoned. His petition Gaj Singh sent to Bijai Singh, advising him to have nothing to do with such men; whereupon Bijai Singh sent for Gordhan Dás, taxed him with treachery, and on his denial produced his "arzi" to Gaj Singh. However, he spared his life in consideration of his services in Bakht Singh's time. In Sambat 1842 the jaleb kot was finished and same year Ráj Singh returned to Bíkánír, Bijai Singh having made himself responsible for his safety. He was attended by Jodhpúr employés. Gaj Singh received him cordially, but induced his other sons, Sartán, Ajab, and Mokam, to seize their brother as he was coming up a passage (nál) from a temple, and he was then made a prisoner. The Jodhpúr attendants were violent and threatened to fight, but they received directions from Jodhpúr to return quietly, as the father was at liberty to do what he liked with the son. Ráj Singh at this time was very ill, and a physician (hákim) from Dehli was summoned to attend on him.

Return to Bíkánír of Ráj Singh. Gaj Singh induces his other sons to seize their brother Ráj Singh.

Gaj Singh induces his other sons to seize their brother Ráj Singh.

The hákim caused the Kanwar to spit into a vessel of water, and when he saw that the phlegm sunk, he said he could do nothing for him, and returned immediately to Dehli.

The Mahárájá also fell ill soon after, and feeling his end approaching, he

Death of Gaj Singh. sent for Ráj Singh and told him that he had in anticipation of his own death been anxious for his return to Bíkánír. He then enjoined him not to punish his brothers for what had happened, and summoning all of his officials, he made them over formally to Ráj Singh. Gaj Singh died Chet Sud 6, Sambat 1844 (A.D. 1788).

Rāj Singh.

Rāj Singh, after the usual interval of twelve days had elapsed, took his seat on the "gadi" Baisākh Bud 2, Sambat 1844, (A. D. 1788). At his father's funeral he put his shoulder to the "Khāssa," or ornamented litter, in which the corpse was carried; but he was unable to go beyond the fort gate on account of his illness. The other sons took part in the rites at "Devī kund," where deceased Bīkānīr Rājās are burnt. But they feared their brother, and from "Devī kund" went straight away to Jodhpur. Rāj Singh distributed the usual "dakhnā" of one rupee a head to Brāhmans; but he refrained from shaving his moustaches, an omission which showed a want of respect for his father.

The new Rājā was very ill, and left affairs in the hands of his minister, Mansukh Neta. "His health got weaker and weaker, and the disease stronger and stronger;" and feeling his end drawing near, he told his brother Sūrat Singh, who not having taken part with his father against him, had not fled from Bīkānīr with the others, to exact for himself the respect due to the occupant of the "gadi," thus recognising him as his successor, or at least as the guardian of his son. Rāj Singh enjoyed his dignity but ten days, and died Baisākh Sud 8, Sambat 1844. Sūrat Singh performed the funeral ceremonies, and it is remarkable that a man, one Sangrām Singh Mandlāwat, was burnt, that is, became "sato" with the Rājā's corpse. Rāj Singh left a son six years old name Partāb Singh, who survived his father but a short time; and though the Kiyānt is silent on the subject, there is little doubt that he was murdered by his uncle Sūrat Singh.

Sūrat Singh.

Sūrat Singh, son of Gaj Singh, took his seat on the "gadi" Asoj Sud 12, Sambat 1844 (A. D. 1787). He was born in Sambat, 1822 (A. D. 1765). His mother's name was Phūl Kaur, and her father was Rāi Singh Rājāwat (Kachwāhā). The Kiyānt is silent regarding his proceedings for three years after his accession, but in Sambat 1847 he is mentioned as exacting Rs. 95,000 from the Thākūr of Chūrū, Rs. 20,000 from the Bhāttī Thākūr of Rājpur, and as punishing the Naetas, an Oswāl clan at Nohar, for treason.

In Sambat 1848 he made Partāb Mal, Bed, his "Kāmdār," and that year reconciliation with the Jodhpur Darbār, which had taken the part of Sūrat Singh's brothers, was effected, and congratulatory presents (tiko) were received from Mahārājā Bijai Singh, who died in Sambat 1850. In Sambat 1855 an envoy from Jaipur came to Bīkānīr, and amicable relations being established, a Bīkānīr official was sent to pay compliments and settle boundary disputes.

In 1856 the Mahārājā founded Sūratgarh, near Sodal. In this year the Bhātīs of Bhatnēr rose, and the Mahārājā marched against them with about 2,000 men, the leaders of whom were the Thākurs of Rāwātsar, Bukarkho, Jetpur, a Mahtā baniā, a Sikh, a Pathān, and a Parihār Rājput. He entrenched himself in a "Dhūl Kot," or fort of brushwood and sand, but pressed by Bhāttī Zābitā Khān with 7,000 men had to fall back to secure supplies. The Bhātīs during this operation concealed their

movements by driving some thousands of buffaloes before them. Supplies and reinforcements having been obtained, the Mahārājā resolved to fight. A Deshnuk Chāran inspired by Karnīj prophesied victory, and having sacrificed one of the water-carrying buffaloes, the Rāthors engaged the Bhātīs, whom they defeated with great loss. The Mahārājā fortified Dūmbli, the place where the action had taken place, and called the stronghold Fatahgarh. It

George Thomas. was, however, unable to resist the famous George Thomas of Hissār, who allied with the Bhātīs and accompanied by the Thākurs of Bula and Magluna in Sikar took it. Soon after, however, it was recovered by a sudden assault led by Rāwat Bahādūr Singh and others, who effected an entrance and compelled the garrison to submit with grass in their mouths. Thānās were then established at Tibi (granted to Bikanīr by British Government for services in the mutinies) and another place.

In Sambat 1858 the darbār engaged in a war to obtain the chain of forts in the desert on the Multān and Delhi route, of which chain its own fort of Anūpgarh was one link. Maujgarh, on the present route between Bikanīr and Bhāwalpur, had been held by one Khudā Bakhsh Dādputra, who expelled from Maujgarh by his chief Bāwal Khān, fled to the Mahārājā of Bikanīr, and asked for redress, promising that if restored, Bikanīr should be left in possession of the strongholds between Anūpgarh and Maujgarh, namely, Balar, Phūlro, Mīrgarh, Jāmgarh, and Mārod (all marked in Stamford's map of India). A force of 25,000 men under Mahtā, Mangnī, Rāmji, and others proceeded *viā* Anūpgarh to the attack of Balar. The force was not, it would seem, accompanied by any thākurs of note. Balar was surrendered on Khudā Bakhsh's promise of safety to the garrison after ten days' siege. It was re-named Siogarh and garrisoned. The force then passed on to Phūlro, which held out seven days. Thence (Chet Sud Sambat 1859) to Mīrgarh, the siege of which lasted fifteen days, and was carried by assault on the sixteenth with a loss of 400 men. Mārod was abandoned by the enemy before the Bikanīr force could reach it. Maujgarh was likewise vacated by the enemy and placed in the hands of Khudā Bakhsh. The army proceeded thence to the Sutlaj, and after plundering it marched upon Bhāwalpur. By this time, however, Khudā Bakhsh had become reconciled with Bāwal Khān, who agreed to leave him in possession of half the territory, and persuaded him to break his connection with the "land seizing Rāthors;" so the Bikanīr force was dismissed with two lākhs of rupees, partly in cash, and it returned to Bikanīr.

In Sambat 1859 the darbār secretly commissioned Rāi Singh Tejsiot of village Menāsar, and another Thākūr, named Ajit Singh, to take by stratagem the fort of Khāngarh on the Sindh border, which was reputed to contain great treasure. The Thākūr of Adūnī joined them, and the three with a body of 300 men left Bikanīr territory under the pretence of a quarrel with the darbār, and they began to make raids into Bikanīr from Mārwar. From thence they suddenly went to Khāngarh, where they encamped 1,000 paces from the fort, and gave out that they were on their way to the Sindh chief, to whom Khāngarh belonged, and that they were the followers of a Mārwar Rāthor of rank who was known to be on intimate terms with the chief. So the fort commandant furnished the party with supplies, and arranged an interview with Ajit Singh. Close to the fort gate were baniās' shops, where, at the time of the commandant's visit to the Bikanīr camp, fifty of the Bikanīr party went on pretence of making purchases.

The commandant sat in darbār with Ajit Singh; opium was handed round as usual, and sugar called for. At this signal the commandant and his people were set upon and killed, the fifty men at the banias' shops rushed in to secure the fort gate, and were rapidly supported by Ajit Singh and the rest, whose horses stood ready saddled. The fort was rapidly secured, and a Bikānir official placed in command. However, no portion of the treasure which was said to be concealed under a tank in the fort, and which was believed to amount to 11,000 gold mohurs, was obtained by the darbār.

In Sambat 1861 a Bikānir force, 4,000 strong, under one Rānā Amar Chand, besieged Bhatnér. On Mangsir Bud 2nd it took possession of a tank of water close to the town, and made a fortified post, but an attempt to carry the fort by escalade failed. The fort was then closely invested, 500 cavalry, daily relieved, patrolled round it to prevent the entry of supplies, and the garrison was reduced to such straits that it had to eat crows. At length Zābitā Khān, Baisākh Bud 4, Sambat 1862, surrendered the fort on being permitted to retire from it with the garrison unmolested. The siege had thus lasted five months and two days. It was re-named Hanūmāngarh, and to the present day all Bhātīs are prohibited from entering it. The successful commander, Amar Chand, received a pākī and was made minister of Bikānir.

In Sambat 1862 the darbār for the first time levied customs dues at Bidāsar, whereupon several Bidāwat thākurs went to Jodhpur, and proposed to transfer their allegiance from Bikānir to Mārwar, as their present chief trenched on their rights. Mahārājā Bhīm Singh of Jodhpur declared their complaint just, and prepared to comply with their request for support. The Bikānir party maintained that the Bidāwats had no special rights, as Bidā, though he first held Dronpur independently of Bikā, lost it and only recovered it by the interposition of his brother, who thus obtained full sovereignty over it. Mahārājā Bhīm Singh, when he began to meditate this wrong to Bikānir, the protected of Karnijī, was taken ill and died of a tumour.

The Kiyānt then enters on the circumstances which led the Mahārājā of Bikānir to ally himself with Jaipur in support of the claims of Dhonkal Singh to the Jodhpur "gadi," which Mān Singh held possession of. Mān Singh offered in exchange for Sūrat Singh's support eighty-four villages of Philodi on the Bikānir border which Mahārājā Ajit Singh had taken from Bikānir, but Jaipur guaranteed their restoration likewise, and the Jaipur alliance being preferred, a Bikānir force, 8,000 strong, occupied Philodi. Mahārājā Sūrat Singh then proceeded *via* Sikar to join Mahārājā Jagat Singh of Jaipur. I omit the detail of their meetings. The Jaipur force was 200,000 and the Bikānir 80,000. They marched together into Mārwar, and near Kuchāwan, after fruitless negotiations with Mān Singh, a battle was fought, in which Mān Singh was defeated, and with a few supporters fell back on Jodhpur, which was taken by the allies and plundered for twenty-four hours. Mān Singh held out in the fort, and the Bikānir troops planted a battery which played on it from the Gulāb Sāgar, on which side it was then undefended by a curtain (Jhalo).

Attack on the City of Jodhpur.

On the remonstrance of a Rānī the fire of the battery was not directed upon the palace. The siege continued seven months. At length, on the safe conduct of Sūrat Singh, Mān Singh sent his principal sardārs to treat for the

surrender of the fort, but as the sardárs would not agree to place the state under Jaipur during the minority of Dhonkal Singh, and as Súrat Singh refused to solve the difficulty by sanctioning the murder of the sardárs, nothing could be arranged, and the siege was abandoned by the chiefs of Jaipur and Bikanír, who went home, leaving Jodhpur to settle its on quarrels. It is not necessary to transcribe from the Kiyánt the detail of the atrocities

Eighth invasion of Bikanír from Jodhpúr.

which followed, and which resulted in Bikanír's abandoning the Márwár territory which it held, and the march into Bikanír of 80,000 men under

Mán Singh, Sambat 1865. A force from Sindh, too, joined the Jodhpur army, and a body of marauders headed by a Musalmán, invaded Bikanír from Shekháwati. The invaders were not unopposed. In Philodi Parohit Giánji gained a success, and by his skill and courage Amar Chand, the conqueror of Bhatnér, with some thákurs, checked the advance of the main Márwár army at the frontier, and then retreated leisurely on Bikanír.

The subsequent siege of Bikanír fort was very feeble, the Jodhpur commander, Indráj, in possession of Gajner, was one of the sardárs whom Mahárájá Súrat Singh had refused to see murdered when they came to treat during the late siege of the Jodhpur fort, and feeling grateful to the Mahárájá, he maintained a correspondence with him. He was superseded for his apathy by one Kalián Mal, who in passing through Deshnuk insulted Karníj, telling her to make haste and save Bikanír. Consequently Kalián Mal, before he had relieved Indráj was taken prisoner by the enterprising Amar Chand, together with a Deshnuk "Seth," Sadal Dada, of Deshnuk, who after a quarrel with the Bikanír Darbár was taking his family and property to Jodhpur. Kalián Mal had to put grass in his mouth, but he was generously released by the Mahárájá, and returned disgraced to his master, who did not remove Indráj from his command. A proposal made by a thákur to call in Bhátis and Johiyás to drive off the Jodhpur army was rejected, and terms were made with Jodhpur by which Bikanír surrendered the Philodí villages and the Dáúdputra forts taken in Sambat 1858-59, and paid an indemnity of Rs. 300,000. Whilst the Jodhpuris were before Bikanír,

Passage of Mr. Elphinstone through Bikanír, en route to Kábul, passed through Bikanír. The "kiyánt" Kábul.

gives a list of his party, and mentions that he was treated with great deference by the Mahárájá, who, Mr. Elphinstone states, offered him the keys of the fort in token of his subordination to the British Government.

In Sambats 1866, 1867, 1869 and 1870, Amar Chand was prominent in punishing refractory thákurs. He realised a heavy fine on the Thákur of Saranbá, and his brother-in-law plundered Súrajgarh in Shekháwati. He took

Services of Amar Chand. prisoner Ratan Singh Bidáwat of Menásar, who was strangled by order of the darbár. He killed all but one of a garrison of more than 300 Bhátis at Dhirdan near Bhatnér. He took prisoner after guaranteeing their safety Partáb Singh who had been ousted from Bukarkho, Náhar Singh of Sidnukh, Por Singh of Bhádhbrán,—all Thákurs of note; and notwithstanding a sacred promise to the contrary, the

Murders. darbár put all to death at Bikanír,—an act considered unjustifiable,—and the public condemnation of it was expressed and rendered permanent by a rhyme (Dohá). Amar Chand's services were much appreciated by Súrat Singh, who accepted an entertainment at Amar Chand's house, where there were sixty kinds of sweet-meat.

In Sambat 1870 the two chiefs of Bikánir and Jodhpúr became friends, a Gúru, Aishjí by name, having acted as peace-maker between them. Súrát Singh agreed to meet Mán Singh at Nágór, and on his way visited Karníjí's temple, walking on foot through the surrounding wood.

At Nágór a difficulty occurred, owing to Mán Singh's objecting to meet Súrát Singh on terms of perfect equality. At length Aishjí overcame the difficulty by arranging that the Maharájas should neither of them sit on a cushion, which was to be occupied by the "Gúru" alone, while the chiefs sat on a carpet (galichá). Another sacred character having to occupy a seat lower than the Maharájá, vindicated his dignity by tying up his head during the darbar. The Gúru exhorted the chiefs to brotherly kindness, and caused them to eat together. An interview between the Maharájá and Ráo Rájá Lachhman Singh of Sikar occurred the same year at Ratangarh. The fort of Dipálsar was destroyed, and its gates sent to Karníjí's temple at Deshnuk.

In Bhádon, Sambat 1871, Amar Chand was sent to attack Chúrú, the Thákur of which, Seojí Singh, was refractory. The fort was blockaded, and an attempt from Sikar to throw in supplies failed, the convoy almost entirely falling into Amar Chand's hands. When the attack had continued for many weeks, the Thákur died,* and shortly after Mangsir Sambat 1871 Chúrú surrendered and Seojí Singh's successor having obtained Abháí Singh of Khetri's guarantee of safety was enabled to go to Jodhpúr. The Maharájá bestowed on Amar Chand the title of Ráowái with "saropáo," elephant, &c., and then came in person to Chúrú and resided in the captured fort. Amar Chand's services were now at an end. He was first fined a lákh of rupees, and early in Sambat 1872 arrested on a charge of intriguing with Nawáb Amír Khán, the Pindári leader. His accusers were a Parihár, a "Khawás," the Kotwál, and the Khetri vakil. Though the charge was false and Amar Chand really a devoted servant of his chief, and though the Khetri Rájá interceded for him and he was ready to pay a fine of Rs. 3,00,000, his enemies prevailed, and he was put to death.

A long chapter of Márwár history then follows in the kiyánt, recording, amongst other incidents, the murder of the two Márwár friends of Bikánir, Indráj and Gúru Aishjí or Deonathjí.

In Sambat 1872 Pírhwi Singh, Thákur of Chúrú, assisted by Shekháwats, attempted the recovery of his patrimony; and a formidable rebellion led by the Thákurs of Bahádrán, Dadrewá, Nimbá, Jessaná, Ráwatsar, and Birkáli broke out, Johiyás and Bhátis aided it, and support from Sindh and Sikar lent to it. The Bikánir minister, Abháí Singh, who had just succeeded one Bhomjí as diván, levied Rs. 20,000 from Ráwatsar and attacked Bahádrán, the Thákur of which called in the Sikhs, and their dominion was established at Bahádrán. Pírhwi Singh's attack on Chúrú failed, and he retreated, leaving his dead on the field; but a sudden assault on Ratangarh was successful, and the darbar's killadár was killed.

In Sambat 1873, Amír Khán Pindári invaded Bikánir as far as Chápar in Bidáwatí; but the Bidáwats carried off his cattle, and on their being returned, he retired to Shekháwatí. The raids of the malcontent thákurs

* He is said to have killed himself by swallowing a diamond.

allied with Pindáris were renewed, and several took forcible possession of their estates. Amír Khán again entered the country, but a pestilence caused him to return to Shekháwati, where he levied a lákh of rupees from the Shekháwats.

In Chúrú were 600 gosáíns in the darbár service, who agreed to give up the town to one of the rebel thákurs and a Pindári force, on promise of Rs. 4,000 and a village in free grant. The town was accordingly entered, but the Bikanír officer, Megh Ráj, refused to surrender, and was killed in the market place, fighting bravely. The fort was bombarded and surrendered in four days, Kátik Súd 15, Sambat 1874.

The insurrection had become so serious that the Mahárájá resolved to ask for British aid, and accordingly he sent a wakil, Aoji Kasu, to Delhi, who negotiated a treaty with the British Resident, Mr. Charles Metcalf. An incorrect translation of the treaty is given in the kiyánt, according to which it was particularly provided that the British Government was to have nothing to do with the "sardárs" or thákurs.

After the treaty had been concluded, British troops of the three arms entered Bikanír under General Alner. They occupied Fatiábád and Hissár, and marched upon Sídmutkh, which held out for ten days. The European regiment with the force then returned to Hissár, and the native troops alone took Jessáo and Birkhálí. Dadrewá resisted for twelve days. Chúrú, approached *via* Sirsáo and Balerogrijairi, was then attacked, and held out for a month. Sulkaniá and Nimbá were occupied by the British force, and Jeth Singh Bídawat was ousted from Sújángarh. Báhádrán, which the Sikhs had retained, was, as before related, taken possession of by the English, who soon

made over the fort to the darbár, but retained the pargana for four years until the expenses of the British force, which amounted to Rs. 75,525 were paid. The forts taken by the British and made over to the Bikanír darbár were twelve in all.

British Government retains possession of Báhádrán for a time.

In Sambat 1877, the Mahárájá's eldest son Ratan Singh, his brother Moti Singh, the Ráwal of Jaisalmír, and his relation Mokam Singh, all married Mewár princesses at Udepur. The details I omit.

In Sambat 1878, Jawánji Maldot of Barú was killed resisting the darbár, and his estate confiscated.

In Sambat 1879 the Jaipur Mahárájá sent a thákur to ask in marriage a Bikanír princess, and the opportunity was taken by Súrat Singh to intercede in behalf of Jellái and for those whom the murderer Shám Singh of Busáo had robbed.

A discussion at this time was going on regarding the villages of Tibí, which Bikanír claimed as part of Bhatnér, but which the British Government had bestowed on old soldiers. Bikanír argued that it had a fair claim to Sirsá and to Fatiábád, but waived this. Its right, however, to the Tibí villages was, it urged, undoubted. However, they were not given up to Bikanír, and the supposed injustice of the decision is enlarged on in the kiyánt, and the subject repeatedly recurred to.*

* These villages were in part bestowed on Bikanír in 1861, for services during the mutinies of 1857.

In Sambat 1881, the Thákur of Dadrewá and the Saledís established themselves at Báhal within British territory, and had to be ousted by a British force, which pursued the marauders, who took refuge in various Bíkánír forts, eight of which were destroyed by the darbár.

Saledís and other marauders on British border.

In Sambat 1884, Abír Chand, as vakíl on behalf of the Mahárájá, was sent to Meerut to be present at Lord Amherst's darbár. A great "nazar" from Bíkánír was presented, and "khilát" received, the detail of which is given in full.

Governor General's darbár.

In January A.D. 1828, Mr. Edward Trevelyan was sent to settle the claims of Bíkánír to the Tibí villages, and to forty villages adjoining Bahádrán, which is called the Beniwal pargana, as belonging chiefly to Játs of that clan.

Boundary cases.

The decisions were unfavourable in both cases.

Mahárájá Súrát Singh's piety, as exhibited in his liberality to Bráhmans, is dwelt upon. "They came from all parts, for the Mahárájá's fame spread to all parts, even to the sea.

Mahárájá's piety.

The old memory of it is still new green and full, and will last for ages." He gave a canopy which cost Rs. 10,000 to Karníjí at Deshnuk, and regulated her worship, fixing the 14th day of the light half of the months Bhádon, Asoj, and Chet for the grand "pújá," and the 14th of the other months for the minor "pújá," and he conferred benefits on the descendants of Karníjí. "An Emperor could not attain to the Mahárájá's grandeur."

The Mahárájá's officials were Nand Lal, the store-keeper, and Sultán Chand, the almoner, both in high favor. Their hospitality to pilgrims was such that "it may be said that Sultán Chand was fit to be an Emperor's steward;" and notwithstanding this bounty, he paid lákhs to the darbár, which fined him for speculation. Abír Chand was the vakíl with the Resident at Delhi. One Múl Chand and Zálím Chand Kochar, Acháraj Parsotam of the Hazúris and Giánjí of the Parihárs (descendants of Belá) were in high favor. The judicial officers were Partáb Mal, Mahtá Bishan Singh, Abhai Singh, Hukam Chand, Lakhmí Chand.

Mahárájá Súrát Singh died Chet Súd 9, Sambat 1884. His eldest son, Ratan Singh, performed the funeral ceremonies.

Death of Súrát Singh.

Ratan Singh.

The kiyánt from this point becomes more tediously minute than before in its record of events, and I shall not attempt to do more than give a brief abstract of it.

Accession of Ratan Singh.

Ratan Singh took his seat on the "gadí" Baisákh Búd 5, Sambat 1885. The "tilak" was, as usual, first placed on the Mahárájá's forehead by the head of the Godára Játs, and afterwards by the Thákurs of Mahájan, Ráwatsar, Bidásar, Bukarkho, Jessáno, Báí, and Gopálpurá in succession.

Placing the tilak.

Soon after the Mahárájá's accession, Bhátís from Jaisalmír carried off a number of the darbár's camels, and both states sent forces to their frontiers. Collisions occurred, in which Bíkánír gained no advantage, and on one occasion nearly lost a Nagará.

Boundary fights and dacoities.

In A.D. 1829 Mr. George Clerk came to settle in Shekháwati cases affecting Jaipúr, Márwár, and Bíkánír. The Bíkánír agents sent to him were Hindú Mal (who afterwards attained to much power in the state), and one Hukam Chand.

Mr. George Clerk settles border cases.

Hindú Mal pleased Mr. Clerk, who induced the three states to engage in writing to destroy the forts of dacoits. Accordingly, several in Bikanir were destroyed.

The same year Mahajan was attacked, in consequence of the Thakur Bairi Sal's persisting in maintaining a body of plunderers consisting of Batoris, Johiyas, and others. The Thakur fled to Tibi, and after three days his much trouble.

"Pardhans," Umrawats, whose origin is told, page , surrendered the fort and the Thakur's heir, Amar Singh (now Thakur of Mahajan), into the hands of the darbar. Soon after Bairi Sal himself submitted, having first stipulated that the Maharaja should promise him pardon, and that the promise should be made at Deshnuk. The pardon was promised in the manner wished, but the Thakur had to pay a fine (peshkash) of Rs. 60,000, and pardon in his turn his servants, the Umrawats, who had surrendered the fort and had served the darbar. The Thakur and the Umrawats then went home, but Magh Sud 3, 1886, Bairi Sal summoned the principal Umrawats, and treacherously slew them to the number of twenty-four. He then fled, and a darbar force occupied Mahajan. I have particularised this event, as it still affects the relations of the darbar with Mahajan. Bairi Sal received aid from Jaisalmir, and allied himself with the Rao of Pugal, the fort of which was provisioned to resist the darbar. The Resident at Delhi, with

The Resident at Delhi warns whom was Hindú Mal, sent chaprasis to warn the sardars, but without effect. At the same time a Banirot allied with Saledis and others of Shekhawat was plundering to the east. The Bidawats followed their example, and a separate body of Jaisalmiris, besides those with Bairi Sal, ravaged the state in the west.

The British Government seeing the state of affairs, ordered a force from Nasrabad to Bikanir, and the date of its marching was actually fixed. But meanwhile the Maharaja in person attacked Pugal, which, after Bairi Sal had fled, surrendered; whereupon the British force was countermanded. Pugal was bestowed on another Bhati named Sadul Singh.

Soon after this, Partab Singh of Bahadrán made a sudden attack on that fort, which was occupied by the darbar troops. It failed, and the assailants left their ladders behind; but a repetition of the occurrence has always been dreaded by the darbar.

Colonel Lockett's visit to Shekhawat. In Sambat 1877, Colonel Lockett's visit to Shekhawat attracted attention, and a Bikanir agent was sent to him.

In Sambat 1888, village Alvana was re-named after the heir to the "gadi" Maharaj Kanwar Sardar Singh, and a fort founded there. Dacoity continued as rife as ever, and the British Government pressed the darbar to exert itself. This year the King of Delhi sent a "Kharita" to the Maharaja

Kharita from King of Delhi. by one Jawaláprasád whom the Maharaja visited. Honor paid to King's picture. The King of Delhi's picture was placed on a cushion, and saluted by the Maharaja, who then received a "khilat" from the King, consisting of horses, nagaras, &c., and the title of Narendro Sawai.

Hindú Mal made Maharao. Immediately afterwards, the Maharaja conferred the title of Maharao on Hindú Mal, his agent with the Resident at Delhi.

In Sambat 1888, the Thákurs of Dhundlod and Mandáwar in Shekháwáti interceded with the Mahárájá for the rebel Bíkánír Thákurs of Mahájan, Bídásar, and Chárwás, who came and did homage. They had to pay sixty, fifty, and forty thousand rupees "peshkash" respectively.

The same year the Mahárájá went to Hardwár to consign his father's ashes to the Ganges. On his return he, at Hissár, obtained the release of Partáb Singh of Bahádrán, who, since his attack on that fort, had been a prisoner at Hissár.

In Sambat 1890, Thákur Bhárat Singh of Gopálpurá and a Sikh Risáldár in the service of the darbár were killed in pursuing the Lotsar Thatháota and Bhojalái, Thákurs of Bíkánír, who plundered the country from Mārwar, and carried off prisoners. At this time raids from one state into the other were constant, and the loss of property great.

Partáb Singh of Bahádrán was again troublesome. He, with thousands of wild characters, seized village Chánní near Bahádrán, from whence he ravaged the whole border; more than a hundred villages were plundered. Sále-dís and Bháttis joined in the raids or plundered independently. The darbár forces attacked Chánní, and failed to take it by assault. The Thákur, however, was starved out, and leaving his family at Chánní he was permitted to go into sanctuary at Deshnuk. Immediately afterwards, on the Kúmbhána estate being sequestered, the Thákur went into outlawry, and, aided by Sikhs, plundered in all directions.

In Sambat 1891, the Mahárájá, at the request of the Governor General's Agent, Colonel Alves, met him at Ratangarh to make arrangements for the tranquility of the border, and it was arranged that Báhrotiás should be pardoned; that Rs. 22,000 a year should be contributed by Bíkánír towards the expenses of the Shekháwáti brigade to be stationed at Jhunjnú, in which a troop of a hundred Bídáwats were to be enrolled. Sangráam Singh of Chárwás was appointed Risáldár of the troop, and Anji of Bhojalái Jamáddár.

Baisákh Sud 13, Sambat 1892, through the mediation of Mr. Trevelyan and another officer sent to settle the Bíkánír and the Jaisalmír boundary, the chiefs of the two states met in a friendly manner, and cordial relations between the two states were established. The same year the famous dacoit

Dúngar Singh of Síkar, who had carried off the camels of a British force, was apprehended through Thákur Mal of Lotsar, and the Mahárájá who had promised the Thákur a village to capture Dúngar Singh received the thanks of the agent.

In Sambat 1893, after a grand inauguration (pratishta) of a monument (chhatri) to his father at Deví Kund, and after repairing the chhatris of his ancestors there, the Mahárájá set off on a pilgrimage to Gyá with six thousand followers. A British officer accompanied him, and he met with much

attention from the British authorities on his journey. At Banáras the Mahárájá made the circuit of the city, and gave away much, the merit thus acquired was (in the opinion of the Kiyánt writer)

the equivalent of an "ashumedha," or horse sacrifice. At Gyá the Maharájá Oath against killing infant made his followers swear never to kill their infant daughters.

When returning home, he was induced to visit Ríwá, where his son Sardár Singh was being married. I give no details of this or of other marriages of this period, as enough has already been told of the ceremonials. In every case the author of the *Kiyánt* mentions whether the bride's father was liberal or not in the supplies provided for guests and in his gifts to bards ("tyág").

The Maharájá returned to Bikanír *via* Alwar, the Maháráo of which was anxious to establish a correspondence with Bikanír, which was, however, declined as being a new thing. On arrival at Bikanír, the Maharájá went to pay his respects to Karníjí at Thákurs reminded at Deshnuk Deshnuk, where he reminded his Rájput followers of their oath against infanticide. (sardárs) of their oath at Gyá not to kill their daughters, and warned them that confiscation of estate would be the penalty for breach of oath.

Thákurs continued to plunder. Lotsar seems to have been the place most notorious for dacoits, and Hukam Chand and Harnáth Singh Nárnót of Mangrásar the most efficient officials employed in checking them. Major Foster's operations against the depredators are repeatedly mentioned.

In A. D. 1837, Mr. Thoresby was sent to re-investigate the claim to the Claim to villages of Sirsá villages in Sirsá; but the darbár derived no benefit border. from the decision.

In Sambat 1896, the Maharájá went on a pilgrimage to Pokhar, near Ajmír, where he had friendly intercourse with the Rájá of Búndí. He afterwards accepted an invitation to Udepúr, where there was much shooting and boating and feasting which it is not necessary to detail in full. The shooting was from a tower and at pig which came when called to be fed.

The Maharáná required the assistance of Hindú Mal, who was with the Maharájá and who seems to have had a reputation in Rájputáná, to arrange for him a visit to Gyá and afterwards to Bikanír, where the Maharáná was to be married. Sardár Singh, the Maharáj Kanwar of Bikanír, was married at Udepúr to a Mewár princess.

In Sambat 1896, a "Ráj tilak tiko" (mission of congratulation) was sent to Maharájá Kharak Singh, who had taken his seat on the cushion of Láhó, and in Sambat 1897 Maharáná Sardár Singh of Udepúr visited Bikanír, to be married to the Maharájá's daughter.

In Sambat 1898, a boundary dispute between Lohsna of Bikanír and Boundary dispute with Jaipúr Khíyálí of Jaipúr was finally settled by Major Forster, who set up boundary pillars. The dispute had caused great trouble.

In Sambat 1899, the Maharájá went to Dehli to meet the Governor General. On his way he encamped at Rení, where he ordered "chhatris" to be erected in memory of Maharájá Anand Singh and Tára Singh. At Dehli the Maharájá was visited by the Governor General at thanked by the Governor General for supplying Dehli. two hundred camels for the Kábul expedition.

In A.D. 1843, Hari Singh Bidáwat plundered so outrageously that the attention of Government was attracted, and the darbár offered a large reward for his apprehension. Dacoits. The same year there were negotiations regarding the line of communication Trade route between Sirsá and between Bháwalpúr and Sirsá. The British Government wished the transit dues to be reduced, and saráis and minárs built along the route; and much pressure was exerted. The dues were, in consequence, reduced from about eight rupees a camel-load to eight annas. A cart-load was fixed at one rupee, and buffaloe, bullock, mule, and pony-loads, at 2 per cent. on value. Unladen animals were to pay nothing. The Government was much pleased at the readiness of Bikánir to comply, and Hindú Mal got great credit for his share in the matter.

In Sambat 1901 (A.D. 1844), the darbár received a kharitá from the Governor General's Agent regarding the infanticide restrictions placed on Chárans and on marriage expenditure. and in accordance with it Bikánir Chárans were forbidden to go to swell the host of beggars at marriages in other states, and regulations regarding expenditure at marriages were issued by the darbár, to the effect that expenditure was to be in proportion to income, and persons without land (bhum) were not to spend more than a hundred rupees, of which but ten rupees was to be in "tyág" or gifts to Chárans.

The Bháwalpúr people from Phulrá are mentioned as aggressing on Bikánir in Sambat 1901, and the "partishta" or Bháwalpúr aggression. inauguration by the Mahárájá of the Chandan Ságar and Gaj Ságar wells are among the events noted. Partishta.

In Sambat 1902, some noted dacoits, Anji of Bhojolái and Hari Singh Bidáwat, were imprisoned in Bhatnér, the villages of which at this time were much depopulated, and the "modhikháná" there (commissariat) mismanaged. Dacoits. Náth Mal, the Kamdár, required seven thousand rupees to enable him to carry on the administration. He was relieved by Hindú Mal. The same year four hundred Bháwalpurís, who had made a "dhulkot" at Tataiá in Bikánir, were surrounded by Díp Singh Ponvár, and only escaped with their lives by putting grass in their mouths. Other aggressions on the part of Bháwalpúr took place. Condition of Bhatnér.

In Sambat 1902, a boundary was settled with Jodhpúr near Sujágarh; the villages concerned were Tharde of Bikánir and Kánpúr of Jodhpúr; and an investigation into the Bháwalpúr and Bikánir boundary dispute was begun by Captain Jackson and Mr. Cunningham. In this latter case Bikánir said the boundary line ran by village Dándá; the Bháwalpúr party, that it ran by village Sotar. The outbreak of the first Sikh war interrupted the enquiry, and Support given in first Sikh war. Bikánir troops in conjunction with a force from Sindh and the Shekháwátí brigade marched towards Ferozpúr. The Bikánir troops did not cross the Sutlaj, but returned before the conclusion of the war to Asabwála. On the re-establishment of peace, rewards were, on the recommendation of Captain Jackson, given by the darbár to the principal officers with the force. Amongst them there were few Thákurs of note; but the latter were represented by their "Pardháns." I omit the list given in detail in the "Kiyánt." Two guns, fully equipped, were bestowed on Bikánir

by the British Government in recognition of its services. On the escape of the noted Shekhawat dacoit, Dungar Singh, from the Agra jail in A.D. 1847, the Governor General's Agent addressed the Bikánir darbár,

Bikánir officials charged with collusion with Dungar Singh. requesting its aid in re-capturing Dungar Singh and his co-adjutors. An accusation against Hindú Mal, of being in league with Dungar Singh, made in a Dehli paper, caused the former so much uneasiness, that he went to Simla to complain of the false charge, and the "Kiyánt" devotes many pages to the refutation of the charge and the detail of Hindú Mal's services. Meanwhile Dungar Singh was at liberty and plundering caravans. He and his ally Jawahír

Dungar Singh and party. Singh got a promise of twenty-five thousand rupees from Rámgarh Aggarwálás whom they took prisoners, and being pressed by Major Foster they entered Bikánir territory and made a push for the Bháti country beyond the city of Bikánir. Hukam Chand was in pursuit and captured some of the dacoits' party with horses and camels. A considerable portion of the ransom of the Rámgarh Aggarwálás was in bills on Bikánir, and when these were paid the money and messengers were caught by the darbár. But the principals escaped and subsequently plundered the Nasirábád treasury, after which Captain Shaw was

Capture by a British Officer of sent after Jawahír Singh, who was known to have Jawahír Singh, relation of taken refuge in Bikánir. Captain Shaw, accom-

Dungar Singh. panied by Harnáth Singh Nánot, surprised him in village Gharsisar which they surrounded; and Jawahír Singh was induced to surrender. Mukand Singh, the present excellent manager of Sikar, was also a "Báhrotiá" and giving much trouble at this period, and the English newspapers accused the Maháráj Kanwar and the Bikánir darbár of collusion with him. However the "Kiyánt" argues that no state could keep the dacoits out of its boundaries; thus, although the Ráo Rájá of Sikar was bitterly hostile to Mukand Singh, he and his followers occupied Rámgarh in that estate and held it for three "pahars" levying a contribution.*

Captain Shaw dissatisfied with the action of the darbár, sent through Hindú Mal "parwánás" and "rukkás" to the chief Bikánir Thákurs, demanding their assistance in the apprehension of dacoits.

Some of the Ráj officials, however, eventually exerted themselves; thus Harnáth Singh Nánot already mentioned more than once recovered property from the Sikar and Jodhpúr banditti, and inflicted loss on them.

Some assistance obtained from Ráj people.

The settlement of the Bikánir and Bháwalpúr boundary was a very tedious affair; investigations continued for years, but a final decision was arrived at in A.D. 1849.

The line ran westward from Anúpgarh and Ballar. After the first Sikh war, the darbár, aided by the British officers on duty with the Bikánir troops, managed to re-open the question of the Sirsá and Bahádrán villages claimed by Bikánir; the final decision seems to have been given after Mahárájá

Sirsá and Hissár case re-opened. Settlement of triple boundary Ratan Singh's death. Bikánir did not gain its point of Bháwalpur, Bikánir, and object. In Sambat 1906, the triple boundary Jaisalmír.

point of Bháwalpur, Bikánir and Jaisalmír, was determined by two officers near Bánd tibbá, and thence the boundary line ran by Deoli and Seoli.

*The publication of these charges against Bikánir produced a great effect in the state, as is shown by the trouble taken to confute them.

During the second Sikh war a small body of horse and artillery were sent by the darbār to act under Captain Shaw at Support given in second Sikh war. Ferozpūr; a hundred camels, too, were engaged in Bikánir for the use of the army, and a quantity of flour was collected, but eventually not required by the British Commissariat. It was found on enquiry being made by an officer who came specially to ascertain, that the Bikánir route between Multán and Ajmir could not be advantageously used by troops owing to the difficulty in obtaining water and supplies.

In Sambat 1904, Colonel Sutherland, Governor General's Agent, visited Bikánir. The occasion was thought important, as it was the first time since Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone's visit on his way to Kábul that an officer of high rank had been at Bikánir.

The details of the reception and festivals are given in full by the author of the "Kiyánt," but I will record them very briefly here. Hindú Mal, who was in bad health, insisted upon going with the "Peshwái" on an elephant, instead of in a pálki; and when he became very ill on reaching the palace, he refused to enter the pálki except at the gate where it was customary to get in and alight. He went home and died. During the Agent's visit to the Mahárájá, the conversation turned on the annexation of Sindh, which the Mahárájá thought unjust. "Nezabúzi," or lance exercise, was one of the diversions enjoyed by the Agent's party. Colonel Sutherland got a fall from his horse, but was unhurt, and the Mahárájá was so thankful for his escape that he gave a hundred rupees in alms as a thank-offering.

Sáwan Sud 11, Sambat 1908, Mahárájá Ratan Singh died. His son and heir Sardár Singh cut off his hair and aided in carrying the corpse to the sun-gate (Súrajpol) of the fort. On the 12th day, the "kirt" (songs in honor of the deceased after a feast to Bráhmíns) took place, and the ashes of the late chief were carefully secured at the dwelling-place of a Vishnú Sádh.

The "Kiyánt" ends at this point. I add a few details which bring the narrative down to the present time.

Sardár Singh.

Mahárájá Sardár Singh succeeded to power in A. D. 1852, at the age of thirty-three, in place of his father Ratan Singh, who died after a reign of twenty-three years, leaving the state encumbered with a debt of about eight and a half lákhs of rupees.

The state expenses had invariably exceeded the income, the heaviest item being the expense of the large army, which at that time was necessary in order to keep in check and subdue some turbulent Thákurs, and to protect the Jaisalmír, Bháwalpúr, Shekháwáti, and Márwár frontiers.

Throughout the late reign there had been only two years of plenteousness, viz., A. D. 1836 and 1837, while the years A. D. 1834 and 1849 were those of actual famine. Scarcity. At the close of the reign, however, the people were generally contented, and all the Thákurs with the exception of Háthi Singh of Síd múkh and Amar Singh of Rájpúr were submissive.

During the time of Sardār Singh, that is, within a period of about twenty years, there were no less than eighteen changes in the ministry. The dismissal of each minister (some of whom held office only a few days) being usually caused by his inability to comply with the pecuniary demands made by the darbār. The following is a list of the ministers with dates :—

A. D. 1852	...	Gúmán Singh Baid and Lachhi Rám Rakhecha.
" 1853	...	Lachhi Rám.
" 1854	...	Gúmán Singh.
" 1855	...	Pandit Dojainant, a Márhatta Bráhmín from Gwálíor.
" 1856 to " 1863 ... }	...	Rám Lál Dwárákání.
" 1864	...	Gúmán Singh Baid.
" 1865	...	Rám Lál,
" 1866	...	Mán Mal Rakhecha, second son of Lachhi Rám, the former Diwán.
" "	...	Sheo Lál Naeta for three months.
" 1867	...	Fatah Chand Surana for fifteen days.
" "	...	Parohit Gangá Rám of Khetri.
" "	...	Shah Mal Kochar for eight months.
" 1862, 1868	...	Mán Mal for eight months.
" 1868	...	Sheo Lál Mohotá for fifteen days.
" "	...	Lakhmí Chand Naeta for eight months.
From June 1868 } to August 1869 }	Wiláyat Husen, an ex-Deputy Collector from British territory, who was succeeded by Pandit Manphúl, C.S.I.	

It will be seen from the above that during the first two years of the present reign the ministry was alternately in the hands of Gúmán Singh Baid and Lachhi Rám Rakhecha, who were bitter rivals.

Rám Lál Dwárákání, appointed in A. D. 1856, was a really good minister. All classes speak of his period of office as a golden time, when nobles were treated with due consideration, when the complaints of the poor were listened to patiently, and if justice was not cheap to those who could pay for it, it was at least obtainable. He enjoyed the support of a powerful Rání, and had consequently much greater freedom of action than is usually possessed by Bikánír ministers. But the Rání died in A. D. 1861, after which Rám Lál's enemies prevailed against him, and he died in disgrace, some say by violence.

In May 1868 an Assistant to the Governor General's Agent was located in Bikánír at Sújángarh, near the triple boundary of Jaipúr, Márwár and Bikánír. The immediate object of his appointment was to check dacoity, which was very rife on the borders of those states and in Shekháwátí, but he was also entrusted with the political charge of Bikánír. The first officer who occupied the post was Captain Powlett. He failed to produce any improvement in the administration or procure the redress of grievances, and just before the arrival of Pandit Manphúl, the Bidáwat, and Mahájan Thákurs had risen to resist the extortion of the darbār. The Bidáwats were, however, pacified; but immediately after the Pandit's arrival other Thákurs rose, chiefly Sringot Bikás, and for many weeks the assistant and the Pandit were engaged

in negotiating between the Thákurs and the Chief. The Thákurs concerned were —

- (1) Amar Singh of Mahájan (Bíká).
- (2) Megh Singh of Jasáná.
- (3) Sheoji Singh of Báí.
- (4) Ganpat Singh of Sídmúkh.
- (5) Mán Singh of Kalisar.
- (6) Lachhman Singh of Bikkáli.
- (7) Khet Singh of Megháná.
- (8) Jawáhar Singh of Hardesar.
- (9) Sakat Singh of Kunwárf.
- (10) Jait Singh of Sain.
- (11) Takht Singh of Khárbara.

Their chief grievances were —

1st.—The seizure by the darbár of certain villages of their estates.

2nd.—Exactions made from them under the name of "Nazráná," &c.

3rd.—The collection direct from their villages of certain miscellaneous cesses.

The arrangement eventually determined on and agreed to by both parties, Settlement of complications. the Maháján Thákur excepted, were:—1st all villages forming part of estates held under valid grants at the time of Mahárájá Sardár Singh's accession and subsequently resumed to be restored. The Mahárájá was to be at liberty to deal with his own grants as he liked.

2nd, the commutation money for each horse formerly furnished for Ráj service was fixed at Rs. 200 for ten years, after which the amount was to be re-considered by a "Pancháyat." This Rs. 200 was to include every thing except "Nazráná" on accession to an estate.

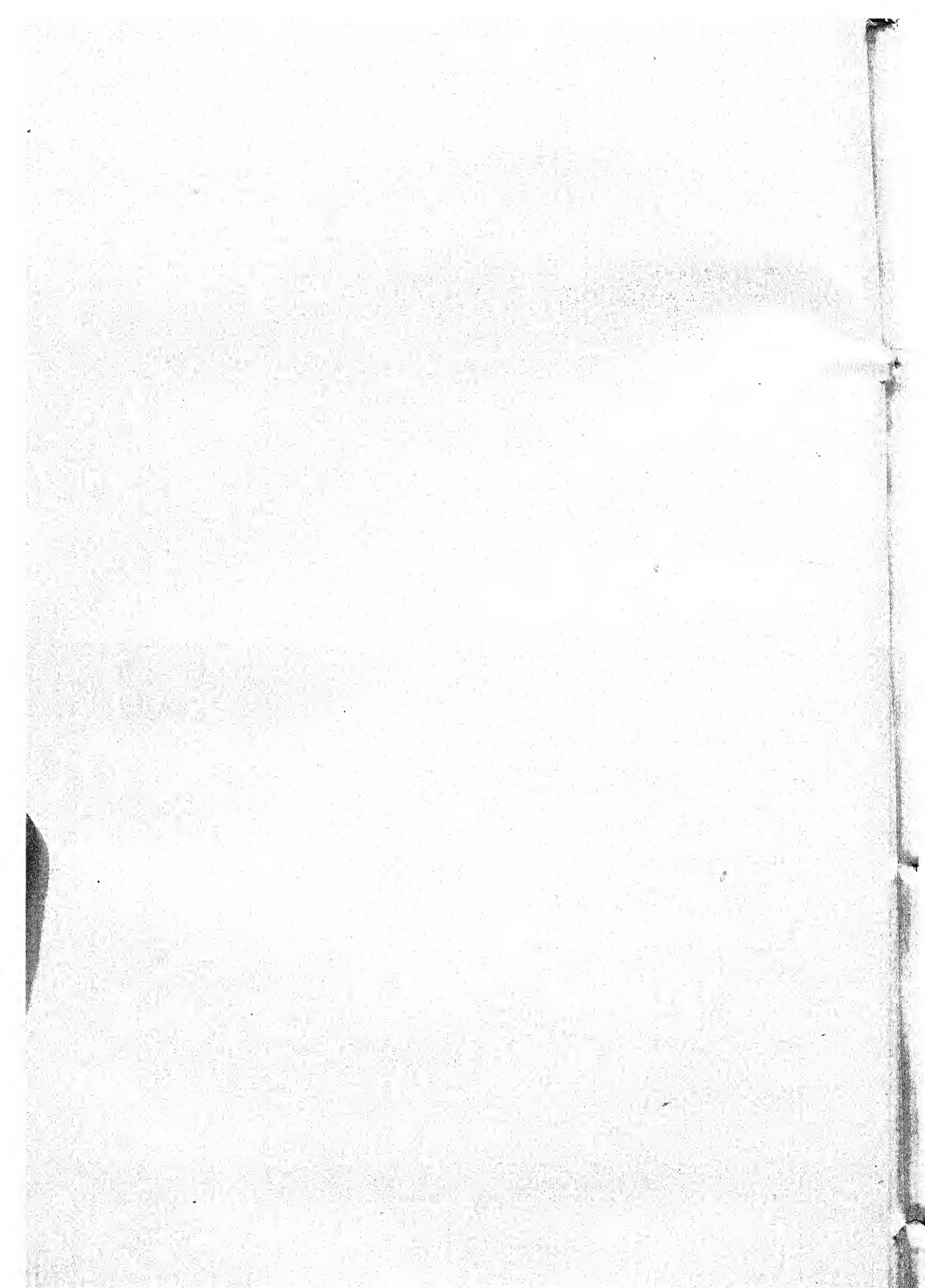
A full report on the matter will be found among the official records. On the affair being settled, Captain Powlett left Bíkánir, and at the end of 1870 was relieved by Captain Burton, who has resided chiefly at the city of Bíkánir ever since.

Mahárájá Sardár Singh died on the 16th May 1872; he was succeeded

Death of Mahárájá Sardár by Dungar Singh, the seventh in descent from Singh, and accession of Dungar Mahárájá Gaj Singh (*vide* Genealogical tree). As he

was a minor, Captain Burton was appointed president of the council established a few months before by Captain Bradford, who had been especially deputed to visit and report on Bíkánir; but as the young chief attained his eighteenth year in September, he was in January 1873 invested with full power and the customary "Khilat" by Colonel Brooke, Governor General's Agent.

Captain Burton, supported by Pandit Manphúl, had taken the opportunity during his short tenure of authority to introduce reforms, a detail of which will be found in his report for 1872-73, and the results of which have yet to be seen.



PART II.

STATISTICAL ACCOUNT.

BIKANIR.—The Ráthor Rájput state of Bikanir is situated between $27^{\circ}30'$ and $29^{\circ}55'$ latitude and $72^{\circ}30'$ and $75^{\circ}40'$ longitude. Its area* is about 23,500 square miles and its estimated population about 300,000. It is bounded on the north by Bháwalpúr, a Mussalmán state, and by the Sirsá district of British territory, on the east by the Hissár district (British territory) and Jaipúr, on the south by Jodhpúr, and on the west by Jaisalmir.

When the treaty between Bikanir and the British Government was signed in A.D. 1818, the boundaries of the state were ill defined. Disputes arose and were settled from time to time by British officers. The principal claims of Bikanir were—

1st.—To a number of villages said to be part of the Bhatner pargana of Bikanir. The claim was disallowed and the villages remained attached to the British district of Sirsá, till in 1861 forty-two of them were granted to Bikanir as a reward for services during the mutiny of 1857.

2nd.—To forty villages said to belong to the Beniwal or Bahádrán pargana of Bikanir. This too was disallowed and the villages attached to Hissár.

3rd.—To tracts of the desert on the Bháwalpúr border. The decision was generally favorable to the Bikanir claims. There were also less important cases on the Jaipúr border, at Sujángarh, on the Jodhpúr and on the Jaisalmir borders. More about these boundary cases will be found in part I and under "Bhatner."

Chief town.

The chief city of the state is Bikanir, which is described elsewhere. Its latitude is $28^{\circ}0'$; longitude $73^{\circ}30'$.

The southern and most of the north-eastern portions of the state forms part of the vast sandy tract in which Márwár and the north of Jaipúr are generally comprised, known as the Bágár.

The north-west and part of the north are in the Great Indian Desert, and the north-east corner adjoining Sirsá is the least unfertile section of the state, as in good years it is well flooded by the Sotra. Except near the triple border of Bikanir, Jaipúr, and Márwár, there are no rocky hills in the state, and even these are not more than five hundred feet above the level of the plain. From the city of Bikanir south-west to the Jaisalmir border the country is hard, and stone also crops out occasionally in the direction of Delhi. But throughout the greater part of the territory the plain is undulating or interspersed with shifting sand-hills, the slopes of which, lightly furrowed as they are from the action of the wind, suggest the sea-shore.

*Deduced from the map of Rájputáná, compiled in the Surveyor-General's Office in A.D. 1846.

Generally speaking, the villages are far apart, and though grass and jungle bushes often abound, the aspect of the country is dreary and desolate, except, as often happens in the cold weather, when a mirage places a lake in the horizon.

There are no streams whatever. In the rainy season a "nallah" sometimes flows from Shekhawati over the eastern

Rivers and irrigation. border, but is soon lost in the sands. The Kagar, called also the "Sotrá" or "Hakrá," once flowed through the northern part of the present Bikanir territory; but it is now dry and wells are dug in its bed, where, it is said, the only sweet water in that region is to be found. In the rains, however, water sometimes flows in it for a few miles, and the Tibi pargana, which adjoins Sirsa and is east of Bhatner, is greatly benefited by it. Some water of the Western Jamna Canal occasionally enters the state, west of Hissar.

There are two little fresh water lakelets formed by the drainage of the rocky country south-west of Bikanir. Both lie on the route from Bikanir to Jaisalmir. The first,

Lakes. Gajner, about twenty miles from the capital, is perhaps the only pretty spot in the territory. The lake is not above a quarter of a mile long, and two or three hundred yards across, but the water is clear: on one side the margin is green and wooded, while on the other there is a palace and garden watered from the lake. In its neighborhood in favorable seasons a good deal of wheat and sarson is grown, the verdure and bright flowers of which are an intense relief to a visitor in the spring after the dreary aspect of the country he has passed through. Kolath, twelve miles farther on the Jaisalmir route, is a somewhat smaller lakelet. Being a place of sanctity, numerous neat bathing "ghats" have been built and fine "pipal" trees shade them. It, too, would afford a pleasing change to any one who has to reside long in Bikanir. The lake of Chapar, in the Sujangarh district, is the principal source of salt in Bikanir; it is about two miles wide by six miles long, but it is very shallow and almost dried up before the hot-weather begins. There is another salt lake about forty miles north-east of Bikanir, but I am unable to describe it. The salt produced from both lakes is of a very inferior quality, valued at about half the price of the Sambhar salt. It is only eaten by the poor and used for curing skins and other antiseptic purposes. The yield at Chapar is, I believe, about ten thousand maunds annually.

Lime is abundant in many parts of the state, notably in the neighborhood of the city of Bikanir, of Sujangarh and other towns. Excellent red sandstone is quarried at

Mineral productions. Khari, thirty miles north-east of the city, and the same stone is found in smaller quantities west of Bikanir. The Khari quarries supply ornamental building materials for all works of importance in and about the city. Rougher stone, called "rorá," "rajashahi," and "bará," for coarse work is quarried near the city. "Multani mitti," a well-known greasy clay used by natives as soap and in dyeing cloth, is quarried in large quantities about thirty miles south-west of the city not far from Kolath. Copper has been extracted from a hill near Bidasar, in the Sujangarh district, seventy miles east of the city; but I believe it never paid to work the mine. Further details will be found under "MINES AND QUARRIES."

Water in Bikanir is found, notwithstanding the slight apparent difference in the level of the country, at very varying depths and of quality as unequal. Thus the city wells are more than three hundred feet deep, but the water of most is of excellent quality, while ten or twelve miles to the north and north-west water is found within twenty feet of the surface. But the drinkable stratum is often exhausted

in the hot-weather, and that below is injurious. At the village of Nokha, south of the city on the Mārwar border, Dr. Moore found a well four hundred feet deep. He makes the following remarks regarding it:—

“Water when drawn from this well was quite hot. No one seemed to have any clear idea when the well was made, and no one knew why that particular spot was fixed upon for sinking a well. In other places the one village well is generally in a hollow or depression between the sand hills, where it would be reasonable to expect water nearer the surface. But Nokha is on a flat site, rather elevated above the surrounding country, the ground hard, and not at all the locality where water would be sought for at that depth with the confident expectation of reward for the labor. It was stated that no one attempts to sink such wells now, probably because the number existing proves sufficient for the wants of the inhabitants, and not, as it would appear, from absence of workmen, for during our stay men were sent down to clear the bottom, so that a better supply of water might be obtained. The shaft being so narrow, the cleansing process is rather a tedious business: first a basket is let down, then a man; he fills the basket at the bottom of the well; he is then drawn up, and afterwards the basket with its contents; and so on till the well is cleaned out. The material brought up was sandy mud, having the usual earthy odour. The water allowed to clear was good, but hard from excess of lime.”

Along the Jaipur border the water is generally of the best quality, and in some places famous for its salubrious properties; but for the most part throughout the state a newly dug well is as likely to produce bad as good water, and it sometimes is so bad as actually to kill, by excessive irritation of the intestines, any animal drinking it. I have added some further remarks on the sub-surface water in speaking of the different districts, especially Sujāgarh and the city of Bikanir. But the people of the country often depend a good deal upon collected rain water, for the sites of villages are almost always in a depression, and often where “kankar” or hard ground is on, or not far from, the surface, so that the drainage of the neighborhood is caught either in covered pits, called “kunds,” or simple excavations. “Sar,” which is the final syllable of so many Bikanir village names, implies a tank or depression.

There is no forest throughout the state, but south of the city, round Johar and Deshnuk, there is much brushwood, in which the Darbār's horses and cattle range. In the neighborhood of Sujāgarh, at village Lotsar,

a few shisham trees grow spontaneously, but the common tree of the country is the *Acacia leucophloea* (“khejra”). It produces a long pod, called “sangri,” which, though not equal to the bābūl as a food for cattle when the bābūl pod is green, is on the whole more valuable, as it is useful when dry. These pods, and also the leaves and even the bark of the “khejra,” are eaten by the poor in times of famine.

The “khejra” wood is of a very inferior quality; insects attack it almost immediately after it is cut, and its boards become half dust in a few months. It is said though that if buried in dung or sunk in salt-water the wood becomes durable. In Rājputānā the “khejra” has a certain sanctity, owing to its figuring in the history of Rām Chandra, and it is worshipped at the Dasahrā festival. The best timber produced is that of the *Tecoma undulata* (“rohera”), a tree with a handsome lily-like flower which affords a passing pleasure to a traveller in the sandy tract during the month of March: it is not, how-

ever, very common. "Bábúl" (*Acacia arabica*) is seldom found, for it does not grow well in sand: *Salvadora oleoides* and *Acacia catechu* ("jhal" and "khair") more frequently. Plantations of *Zizyphus jujuba* (bair trees are met with near Bikanir city, and a few trees will be found near all the towns, and sometimes a good deal of the fruit is produced.

Of bushes the "phog," a low, leafless shrub, the botanical name of which is, I believe, *Calligonum*, is the commonest and most useful. Its twigs and roots support the sides of wells where water is a few feet below the surface of the ground, and they supply material for building huts: green it affords food to camels, and its buds, called "lasson," are eaten with buttermilk and condiments by the poor in February and March. A peculiar attachment seems to be felt by Ráthors for this type of the vegetation of the sandy tract. I have known a Márwár thákur settled far from his native state sow it in sandy soil near his adopted home, and an anecdote, known to every Bikanirí, is told of a Bikanir noble who, when exiled to Kábul, discovered one day a single plant of the "phog" bush growing in the neighbourhood of his place of confinement. He was much affected and embracing it exclaimed—

Tu saindesí rukhrá ham pardest log,

Mhane padshah láya thane kun láya phog ?

Plant of my native land, strangers are we,

The king brought me here but who brought you?*

The "sajji" (*Salsola* ?), from which soda is produced, is an important plant in the desert, where many people are employed in the manufacture. It is said to grow chiefly on the hard, low ground where water has collected. The "karil," a well-known jungle caper, is met with and is useful as food. Other wild vegetables and fruits used as food are the "tumba," a sort of melon, the seeds of which are collected and pounded into a kind of flour, the "khimp" (*Orotolaria*), the stems of which are eaten, the "bánkri" or *Caltrops*, the káchrí berry, a rough fruit containing masses of pips. The "ak" (*calotropis*), the fibre of which is the strongest known, is a common plant almost everywhere, and the "bair" (*Zizyphus*) bush, the most valuable of grazing shrubs, is plentiful in a few places.

Of grasses the "bharút" is generally the commonest in the southern half of the state, and since its seed (a sort of canary seed) is more eaten by the very poor than any other kind of grain, and it supplies fairly good fodder for cattle, it may be considered a very valuable production. But its prickly husks lame dogs, are "the torment of travellers," and add appreciably to the discomforts of a residence in Bikanir—a circumstance which in time past has been turned to account by Bikanir chiefs (*vide* History, page 34). Other grass grains are used for human food, such as those of the "daman," "mákra," "ganthil," and "phúler," the seed of which last is called "phúlish," and is only digestible when eaten with ghi or buttermilk.

The large grass used all over North India for making screens or "chiks" (*Rana, pula, sarkandi*), is common.

Bikanir abounds in the best cattle grasses. Of these "ganthil," a low fine grass so called from its top knot (gánth), ranks first, both for the production of wool and ghi. It abounds more particularly in the latitude of the city; as also does "sewan," a rather tall and fine grass very good for sheep. "Kíú," the chief grass on the banks of the Chápar lake, is particularly good for cattle; it is also abundant in the north of the state. "Dáman," too,

is very common in the north ; it is said especially to promote cattle breeding : other good grasses are "karr," more common in Márwár, "narara," and "ganthia." Bharút is most abundant in the southern part of the state, and ranks after those just mentioned.

All Bikánir may be said to be a pasture ground. To the north about Hánúmágarh (the old Bhatner) the grazing is famous, but after fair rains good grazing is everywhere to be found. The banks of the Chápar lake vie with the pastures of Bhatner, and there is a saying : "*Chápar ká chaupá Bhatner ná cháhue*" (the cattle of Chápar love not Bhatner).

The people of Rájputáná sometimes divide the country into botanical zones, the limits of which are sufficiently defined to form rough political boundaries : thus the "lai" and the "sajji" mark the desert, the "bharút" grass the country south, the "karr" grass still further south, and the "aonla" bush marks the fertile region of Mewár south of that (*vide* History, pages 13 and 36, and Tod, Vol. I, page 595, 2nd edition).

In the northern part of the state west of Anúpgarh there is little cultivation, and the people depend chiefly on their cattle, which are watered at reservoirs called "tobas" and graze at large. Sindhis and others bring their cattle to this tract when grass is plentiful ; but a clan of Pirzádás, or descendants of a Muhammadan saint, claim to be the lords of the region between Anúpgarh, Púgal, and Marot, having obtained it in grant from the Emperor of Delhi. The robbers of the desert respected their persons and property as they would have respected no one else : the Bikánir Darbár exacts no dues from them, and they themselves receive two seers of ghí from all who pasture their cattle in the waste (see Captain Jackson's report on Bikánir and Bháwalpúr boundary). The Ráthhs (Mussalmáns of Rájput extraction) of this region are spoken of as a pastoral tribe.

Where water is procurable, deer are common enough, and there are two peculiar kinds. In the neighborhood of Gajner wild pigs are preserved and do great mischief. No life may be taken near the temples of repute ; and as they are always beside tanks, wild animals can drink unmolested. Wolves abound to the north of Bikánir and do much mischief. The inhabitants when they kill them sometimes take their heads to Sirsá for the reward given by the British Government. Foxes are common and easily approached, and snakes are numerous. Rats are abundant and troublesome.

Partridges (but I believe only the brown kind) are very common in Bikánir. The largest coveys are to be seen in and about the villages. The large bustard (*gúran*) is always to be found within a few miles of the city of Bikánir, and is often met with elsewhere ; as also are several kinds of grouse (*batbat*, &c.). Florican (*tilor*) are numerous in some places, and at Koláth, Gajner and the tanks of that region wild ducks are abundant in the cold-weather.

A complete account of the plants and animals of the desert and sandy tract is not in existence. It is to be hoped that some person with the requisite leisure and opportunity will prepare one, and also amplify Colonel Tod's general account, which however has reference more to the desert west of Bikánir than to that within its limits.

A census of most of the parganas was taken at my request, but of the procedure adopted I am ignorant, and I prefer to assume the number of houses as correctly recorded, and from them to calculate the probable population, rather than to accept the

reported figures referring to the latter. Allowing five souls to a house, the result is as follows :—

No.	Division.	Villages.	Houses.	Population.
1	Anúpgarh	37	594	2,970
2	Sardár Shahr	93	2,953	14,765
3	Suratgarh	28	1,973	9,865
4	Hánúmágarh	110	2,715	13,575
5	Tibi	42	1,936	9,680
6	Mahájan	69	1,104	5,520
7	Bahádrán	89	3,738	18,690
8	Chúrú	13	2,442	12,210
9	Rájgarh	157	5,391	26,955
10	Rení	129	3,970	19,850
11	Nohar	124	3,541	17,705
12	Sardárgarh	25	403	2,015
13	Pánehon	254	4,000	20,000
14	City ... ..	...	8,801	44,005
15	Sheksar	324	5,200	26,000
16	Sujágarh	210	8,259	41,295
17	Khálsá	17	272	1,360
18	Púgal	50	850	4,250
TOTAL ...		1,771	58,142	290,710

Ratángarh, which is held in grant, seems to have been omitted from this list. Altogether the population cannot be less than 300,000.

It is feared that even the number of villages in the above statement is not reliable, as the darbár has reported that there are 1,797 in the whole state. In A. D. 1870 there are said to have been 1,814. It is so common in Bikánir for villages to be abandoned and repopulated that one can never be certain of the precise existing number. The most numerous castes are—

CASTES.	Ját, numbering about ...	50,000 ; all agriculturists.
	Banías ...	30,000 ; some cultivate the soil.
	Rájpúts ...	12,000 ; three-fourths cultivators.
	Bráhmans ...	20,000 ; mostly cultivators.

The races and castes exclusive of the above, arranged according to their numerical importance in the city, are as follow ; nearly all till the land more or less :—

Chamár (leather-dressers and village drudges).
 Kumbárs (potters).
 Khátis (carpenters).
 Káim Kháni (Musalmáns of Rájput extraction).
 Hajjám (barbers).
 Ahiri or Tohri (low-caste people).
 Dhánaks (ditto).
 Musalmáns (Saiyads and others).
 Ráth (Musalmáns of Rájput extraction).
 Zargars (goldsmiths).
 Bairágis (religious characters, usually Vishnu worshippers).
 Mális (gardener class).
 Dhobí (washermen).
 Gosáin (religious characters).
 Báori (a low thieving caste, often employed as watchmen).

Cháipá (cloth printers).
 Swámi (devotees of Mahádeo).
 Khátris (meat-eating Bámás).
 Fakírs.
 Kassábs (butchers).
 Halál Khors (sweepers).
 Dákots (professional beggars).
 Raigars } (Leather-workers).
 Khatíks }
 Dammánís (Musalmáns kettledrum-beaters).
 Mochís (shoemakers).
 Telís (oilmen).
 Gújars (a well-known caste).
 Bisátís (pedlars).
 Mínás (a well-known caste).
 Rangrez (dyers).
 Chárans (a caste of minstrels of Rájpút extraction held in high estimation and exercising much influence, though less now than formerly) see "OFFICIAL CLASSES."
 Kaláls (spirit-sellers).
 Lakherá (workers in lac).
 Ahírs (a great and well-known caste).
 Darzí (tailors).
 Tarag.
 Lohár (iron-workers).
 Chumápuz (lime-makers).
 Maimár (masons).
 Sewak (temple servants).
 Sepoys.
 Báfindá (weavers).
 Sakká (water-carriers).
 Níaríá (sifters of ashes obtained from gold and silver smiths).
 Bhagat (devotees).
 Sikligar (tin-workers).
 Bhabúnjá (cooks).
 Káyath (writer caste).
 Khojás.
 Kunjá (greengrocers).
 Táshá Nawáz (musicians).
 Jattí (Jain priests).
 Nakkáls (actors).

The Játs, who are more than twice as numerous as any other caste, were Játis. anciently the possessors of the greater portion of the present Bikanír territory. Some account of their position, former organization, and subjugation will be found in the history of Bika's occupation of the country. They are the agriculturists of the country, and more severely taxed than any other class. A Ját is said to pay thirteen taxes of different sorts. Many of them are Bishnawís and eschew the taking of life. They are generally civil and obliging, but will not assist or sanction the slaughter of game. They are good-humoured and ready to joke about the rats which do so much mischief to their crops and stores of grain. Notwithstanding the weight of taxation laid on them, they are attached to the Mahárájá, and so proud of notice from him that a Ját has been known to present a "nazar" of Rs. 1,200 in order to secure an extra share. The headman of the Godará clan of Játis places the "tilak" (or mark of inauguration) on the forehead of every Rájá of Bikanír when he first takes his seat on the "gadí." The practice has prevailed ever since the foundation of the ráj. The Bishnawí Játis bury instead of burning their dead, and "satís" are sometimes buried alive with the corpses of their husbands. Pipásar and Samrathal are mentioned in the Hissár Gazetteer as places in Bikanír sacred as being

respectively the birth and burial place of Jambhaji, the chief Bishnawi saint, who was a Ponwar Rájput and flourished in the 15th century of the Christian era.

Banias of the Mahesri, Oswál, and Aggarwál castes form the bulk of the trading community. The Mahesri and Oswáls are the richest, and as many of them have houses in British territory, and know how to bring pressure to bear on the darbár, they are treated more considerately than the Aggarwáls. The latter trade a good deal locally in English imported goods, while the Mahesris and Oswáls are opium traders, contractors, bankers, &c., and their business is generally far from home.

Rájputs of many clans are to be found in Bikanír. Remarks on the aristocracy which they form will be found elsewhere: it consists chiefly of Bháti Rájputs to the west and Ráthors elsewhere. The Rájputs here, as in every other state, may be divided into three classes—*1st*, those who hold estates; *2nd*, those in service; *3rd*, those who till the soil. The first class comprises the old hereditary aristocracy of the state and a few who have obtained grants more recently; the second those employed by the nobles as well as the servants of the darbár; the third are by far the most numerous, and in the assessment of the revenue on their lands are treated with some favor.

Bráhmans are the next numerous caste; Pokarna and the Paliwáls are the principal divisions. They are traders and agriculturists, and generally a hard-working class. There are, I believe, ten times as many Pokarna Bráhmans as of any other division of that caste. The Paliwáls are the most remarkable Bráhman agriculturists. Some observations on them have been made under "EMIGRATION." For interesting remarks regarding the origin and character of both, *vide Tod, Vol. II, pp. 286 and 287.*

Chamárs, also called Baláls, are the only remaining numerous class. The most remarkable fact in connection with them is that, despised as they are, one of their number has within the last forty years founded a religious sect, called "Alakgir," which numbers high officials and thákurs amongst its adherents. It is further spoken of under "RELIGION."

For remarks on Saiyads, Bháttis, Ráths and Johiyas, and other Musalmáns, see "PASTORAL PEOPLE" page 85, "ARMY," page 104 and "HANUMANGARH," page 121.

The following is an extract from the annual report on Bikanír for 1869-70:—

"Many agriculturists have left for British territory, especially the Paliwál Bráhmans, an enterprising caste of trading agriculturists who inhabit twelve large villages west of Bikanír.

"Hundreds of these have traded successfully and occupied lands in the North-West Provinces, the wealthy ones among them coming occasionally to their homes, where they have good substantial houses and where in good years they or their relations raise fine crops of wheat. But the mass of Paliwál emigrants have gone for good; men of other castes, too, have settled in the British districts immediately east of Bikanír, and more would go were land procurable. It is, however, a mistake to suppose, though it is sometimes imagined, that the wealthy merchants are leaving Bikanír. So far as can be ascertained, they show no preference for living under the direct rule of the Government to which they indirectly owe their wealth, and they visit British territory no oftener than is necessary for the superintendence of their houses

"of business, which extend from Calcutta to Bombay and from Lahore to Madras. Very few of them are in any degree penetrated by European ideas, though exceedingly anxious to obtain the benefits of British protection." If land were now available in Hissar, many people from Bikanir would go there as they formerly did (*see Hissar Gazetteer, pp. 41 and 43*).

It is impossible to give statistics showing the respective numbers of orthodox Hindus, Musalmáns, and Jains in Bikanir, as none have been supplied. Of the three principal Banía castes, Mahesris are orthodox Hindus, Oswáls are Jain, and Aggarwáls are partly Jain.

RELIGION.

The worship of Karniji, a Cháran woman who was an incarnation of Devi, is the chief religious deity of the court. It was her supernatural power which secured the territory of Bikanir to Bika and his descendants, and were she estranged the state would be ruined. The temple of Deshnok, as old as the state, is therefore the chief shrine in Bikanir; but Karniji is invoked in other lands far from the place of her origin, and she has devotees of all castes. Some temples in her honor were built in the Dakhan, and one raised by a Sesodia lady is in the upper fort at Alwar. As represented on stones or on gold and silver charms worn round the neck, Karniji holds a "tristúl" or trident in her hand.

Lakshmi, however, is in Bikanir worshipped with scarcely less devotion than Karniji. The temple of Lakshmi Náth is the principal one in the city of Bikanir, and the chief is styled the Diwán of Lakshmi Náráin. The state is in fact under the joint protection of the Goddess of Destruction and Goddess of Prosperity (*vide History, page 45*).

The temple of Lakshmi Náráin was built by Ráo Lunkaran, who ruled in Bikanir between A.D. 1505 and 1527. The orthodox Hindu temple third in rank, is that of Dhúni Náth, built by a Jogí, named Dhúni Náth, in Mahárájá Surát Singh's time. It contains images or symbols of the five chief deities—Bráhma, Mahesh, Suraj, Bishan, and Ganesh.

The temple of Bhaironji, at Karamdesar, near Gajner, has an historical interest as having been founded by Bika (*vide History, page 2*).

The temple of Devi, at Nágniji, a mile south-east of the city, has a considerable reputation. The image it contains was brought from Jodhpúr hundreds of years ago. Its vehicle stuck fast on the spot where now stands the temple, which was built in accordance with the wishes of the goddess thus indicated. Of the more recently built temples, the principal are built within the last two generations by Ránís and mistresses of the chief. Considerable estates have been assigned them.

The Jain temples are Bhándásar and Nemnáth, two large temples, at least as old as the city, built by one Bhandá Oswál and his brother: Chintáman and Sri Mahábír, both built by the fourteen "mohallás" or quarters of Oswáls, the first at the suggestion of the Bachawat, Karam Chánd, whose family was extirpated by Rájá Sur Singh. Sri Mahábír has an inscription. Allusion to the appearance of the buildings will be found under "CITY."

The Maháráj Vishnú Gossáins of the Balbachárya sect, whose foul practices were exposed in a great libel case in Bombay some years ago, have many devotees in Bikanir, and when two of them, offended by the discountenance they met with from the

Mahārājā of Jaipur, abandoned that state, they were invited to Bikanir, and were received there with great honor, the late chief himself going forth to meet them and running beside their palanis fanning them. In their presence he used to stand with folded hands, and for years the cost of their maintenance was a grievous burden to the state. They at length left for the neighborhood of Mathura. The priests of the most celebrated temples are not foreigners, but Bikanir Brahmins of the Bias tribe, known as Sewaks.

There are, of course, local deities and shrines to be met with in obscure villages, which exercise much influence in their neighborhood. As an instance of one class, I

may mention the "samadh" (cenotaph) of a Jat, one Jesnathi - a saint whose miracles made such an impression on the Delhi emperor of the day that he bestowed on him a grant of land near his native village Malasar, situated fifteen miles north-east of the city of Bikanir. The estate is still held on this title and the deed of grant preserved. In seven villages round "samadhs" of Jesnath's dead descendants have been established, and his living ones receive a rupee on the birth of every child within the circle, one seer of "ghi" on the birth of a calf, half a seer for a young buffalo, and two pice for a kid.

Unless by way of sacrifice at temples of the sanguinary deities, no animal may be killed near any of the shrines, priests of which plead their privilege (marjad) if any one shows a disposition to offer violence to a duck on their

Jujhars. tanks or a partridge in their enclosures. "Jujhars" or heroes who have fallen in defending their

neighborhood from predatory bands, or in recovering the cattle carried off by them, are another class whose shrines are much respected. They, too, are sometimes Jats: thus Bigga, a village with five hamlets between Bikanir and Ratangarh, is said to derive its name from Bigga, a famous Jat who was killed as long ago as A. D. 1315 by Rath dacoits who were carrying off the cattle of the place. Many villages around cherish his memory. On the 13th of Phagan Sud (February) there is an annual *fete* in his honor, and the 13th of every month is sacred to him. Brahmins collect from their constituent jimmans in Bigga's name and the people still sing ballads in his praise.

A very spirited song of modern composition, describing his independence, valor, and the way he met his death, was recited to me at Bigga.

Jains are in the towns fully the equals of the orthodox Hindus as regards Jains and orthodox Hindus. numbers and wealth. But on the part of the

latter there is a strong feeling against them, as shown by the saying, not peculiar to Bikanir, "that a Hindu had better be overtaken by a wild elephant than shelter himself in a Jain temple, and to escape a tiger he may not run through the shadow of it." There are seven "upasaras" or Jain monasteries in Bikanir. A list of them will be found under "CITY," and their teaching will be spoken of under "EDUCATION."

The Musalmans of Bikanir are insignificant in number and importance.

Musalmans. They, however, maintain five small mosques within the city and one or two outside. In these, prayers are regularly said on Fridays, and there are several others which are unused. There are a good many Musalmán sepoys, chiefly Saiyads and Káim Khánis.

Perhaps the most curious religious sect in the state is that of the Alak-

Alakgirs. girs founded by Lalgir Nagá. He was the son of a Chamár of Sulkaniá, a village of Bikanir on the Jaipur border. When five years old, he was carried off by a Nagá or military monk, who made him his disciple (chela) and gave him the name he became

know by. Fifteen years after Lálgir returned to Sulkaniá with his gúru, the Nágá, who, discovering that he was the son of a Chamár, abandoned him and went through a course of purification. In Sambat 1886 (A.D. 1830) Lálgir came to Bikánir, where he dwelt in a hut near the west gate of the fort for twelve years. On the Mahárájá going a pilgrimage to the Ganges, Lál Singh accompanied him, and on his return he obtained a sum of money with which he began to construct a fine well at his native village. The well being completed, he returned to Bikánir, where he began to gather a following, notwithstanding that he made no secret of his being a Chamár by birth.

He denounced idolatry and taught his followers to call only on the Incomprehensible (Alak), and his sole worship consisted in crying "Alak!" "Alak!" Charity was to be practised, the taking of life and meat as food were forbidden, asceticism was held profitable to subdue passion, and the sole reward was attainment in this life to purity, untroubled contemplation, and serenity (*sat, chit, anand*). There was no future state: heaven and hell (that is, happiness or misery) were within, and may be made independent of, external circumstances, but all perishes with the body, which is finally resolved into the elements, and man has no immortal part. Peace in life and a good name after it were the sole, but sufficient, inducements to the practice of virtue.

His principal disciple was Lachhí Rám, chief steward of a powerful Ráni and father of Mán Mal of the present Bikánir Council. In Sambat 1901 Lachhí Rám, prompted by his gúru, began the splendid Alak Ságar well at Bikánir, which was finished in 1909.

One day Mahárájá Ratan Singh was going to the temple of Lachmi Náráin, when Lálgir sneeringly asked him what was to be got there. The Mahárájá, enraged at this insolence, expelled Lálgir from Bikánir and threw his book, which contained abuse of Hindúism, into water. Lálgir went to Jaipúr, whence he wrote letters calling upon his faithful disciples to assume the garb of sanctity ("bhagwán libás," clothes of a red color worn by Dádú panthis, &c.) and become jogis. His disciples obeyed and the sound of "Alak!" "Alak!" resounded on all sides. In 1908, Mahárájá Sardár Singh noticed the schism, and the excitement occasioned thereby, and ordered the expulsion from the state of all the Alakgirs. Those of weak faith abandoned the prescribed dress and habits and remained quietly at home, but Lachhí Rám kept steadfast; and was accordingly expelled the state and his religious books destroyed. He went to his gúru at Jaipúr, whence his son Mán Mal, on becoming minister of the state sometime after, summoned him. Alakgirs are chiefly ascetics and recluses (*sanyásis*), but a few are family men. Ten divisions of the sect are mentioned, but I believe it is not numerous. They do not admit Musalmáns, and apparently consider themselves a Jain sect, and respect, though they do not worship, the Jain Rishis.

Their festivals are the anniversary of their founder's death, that of the last gúru, and the full moon of Asárh: on these days they give alms and visit the cell of their founder. There is no gúru now, but if a worthy man should appear he would be accepted.

Bikánir is the only large town in the state. Its population is, with its suburbs, 35,668. It is surrounded by a high wall, and contains many large masonry houses. It lies in the western part of the state; latitude 28° ; longitude $73^{\circ} 25'$.

Chúrú, on the Jaipúr border, latitude $28^{\circ} 20'$ and longitude $75^{\circ} 4'$; population something under 10,000. Here the lines of traffic between the Dehli, Hissár, and Gurgáon marts and Bikánir and Jodhpúr, converge or cross one another.

Ratangarh, latitude $82^{\circ} 1'$, longitude $74^{\circ} 35'$, on the Jaipur border, is about the same size as Chûrû, and Sujāgarh, latitude $27^{\circ} 40'$, longitude $74^{\circ} 30'$, somewhat smaller. The latter town is near the triple boundary of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Bikanir, and is the head-quarters of a British political officer established there in 1868 to put down dacoity. He has also political charge of Bikanir.

Rajgarh,	lat. $28^{\circ} 38'$	long. $75^{\circ} 20'$	} have populations over 2,000.
Reni	„ $28^{\circ} 40'$	„ 75°	
Nohar	„ $29^{\circ} 10'$	„ $74^{\circ} 50'$	
and perhaps			
Bahadrân,	lat. $29^{\circ} 10'$	„ $75^{\circ} 12'$	}
Suratgarh		„ $74^{\circ} 3'$	
Deshnuk,	lat. $27^{\circ} 42'$	„ $73^{\circ} 25'$	
Kolâth	„ $27^{\circ} 45'$	„ 73°	

Deshnuk is remarkable as possessing the chief shrine in Bikanir – that of Kârñijî, the tutelary deity of the state.

Kolâth is famous for its great fair on the full moon of Kârtik (October), when many cattle change hands.

The agricultural community number about two hundred and sixty thousand; the non-agricultural forty-thousand. The figures have no pretension to be more than an approximation to the truth.

MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE. The wealthy classes are the officials who have made money by speculation and extortion and the merchants who trade in British territory.

Few thâkûrs are rich in consequence of the heavy taxes imposed by the darbâr. The gains of hâkims or collectors of revenue are in Bikanir probably greater in proportion to the revenue they collect than in most native states, owing to the size of the tract confided to each individual and the consequent difficulty of supervision. The zamindârs, with an exaggeration which reveals the general truth, say that for every copper coin (takka) received by the state a chaprâsî gets a silver and a collector a gold one. Their sanctioned pay is very small. The agricultural community is for the most part miserably poor, and they speak with envy of the circumstances of villages in the adjoining British territory of Hissâr. Their camels, kine, and sheep are a great resource to them; but the greater number of kine are starved to death when grass and water fail from want of rain, and all cattle are liable to be carried off by dacoits or thieves.

Though famines are frequent and a general famine occurs at least once in ten years, the mass of the people possess no stores of grain wherewith to meet them, and when they occur either emigrate or depend on charity and grass seeds. Bâjrâ chapâtis, moth dâl, râbrî, or porridge made with butter-milk and bâjrâ flour, form the staple food of all but the few well-to-do; indeed, the well-to-do often use bâjrâ rather than expensive wheat flour. Jâts, who own many cattle, consume enormous quantities of “ghî.” Sugar is largely eaten at festivals. A list of the wild products used as food will be found specified under “FORESTS.” Of these “bharût” is the principal. Dr. Moore states that all are found for sale in the Bikanir bazar. I have known “bharût” sell, even when scarcity did not amount to famine, at only 20 per cent. less than bâjrâ, and it is said that one family often collects and stores thirty maunds of it.

The dress of the poor have, I think, no peculiarities. Among the com-

DRESS.

fortable the style of the turban is thought of more than anything. The most striking and graceful fashion is that of Rājputs and officials called the "kirkia." These classes wear "jāmās" or long tunics with their "kirkia" turbans, and this constitutes the court dress. Sāhukārs, or merchants of good position, wear the turban in the mode termed "lapetā:" the inferior ones affect the "nāgori" or "jaipūria," while all Brāhmans and young men generally wear the turban "kindwi."

The houses are of three classes—"hawelis" or masonry houses occupied by the well-to-do, "dundas" or mud houses in which dwell the class between the comfortable and the poor, "and gupes" or huts which are made from phog roots and grass, and which in almost all villages are more numerous than the other descriptions and are often the only dwelling-places. They are round and look like small nicks: an enclosure of thorns usually surrounds them and indeed most dwelling-places, and serves as a protection against the sand drifts and hot winds as well as a cattle-pen. Cenotaphs, either "chhatris" or "chauntrās" (domes or platforms), are here and there seen in the villages; also pillars or slabs bearing representations of the popular deities or of sātis.

I have not the materials for estimating the monthly expenses of average shopkeepers and peasants, but it is said that the former are more thrifty, and more of their women engage in trade than in Hindūstan; and usurious as are the Baniās to the east, those of Bikānir are said to be even more so. Many of them gamble in time-bargains, buying opium about to be sold in Calcutta at a speculative price. The opium does not ostensibly change hands, but accounts are settled when news of the sale reaches Bikānir, and so anxious are speculators to have early information of the prices, that some merchants maintain, or till recently maintained, at considerable expense, a special daily post between Ajmir and Bikānir, notwithstanding that a slow public post was established. I have already remarked that the wealthy merchants prefer life in the deserts of Bikānir, in a dirty town without roads and trees or a single visible attraction, to passing their time amid the comparative comfort of Calcutta, Bombay, or the other cities of British territory where they make their money. It is true that the climate suits them better, and Bikānir is the land where they were born and bred, but I believe the neighborhood of a native court has in itself charms for them. Some would like to see the chief more under the general guidance of a British officer, in order that the main evils of the administration might be redressed, but none would wish for interference which would lower the dignity and importance of the Darbār. The Baniās of the desert are said in Hindūstan to have a better physique than their eastern brethren, and the many good soldiers they have furnished the darbār would appear to bear this out.

The staple crops are bājra and moth, and the bājra of the sandy tract is

CROPS AND TILLAGE.

said to be especially good, particularly in certain localities. Comparatively little of anything else is raised in the state, except when the rains are unusually abundant. In such seasons fair crops of barley and wheat and garden vegetables are produced in about a dozen villages west of Bikānir, in the northern district (Tibi), where the spring harvest is sometimes large, and about the towns, particularly those from Sujāngarh eastward. The radish is the vegetable most easily raised and most commonly seen, but some carrots, onions, and tobacco are grown at Ratangarh and a few other places. Tibi, the pargana acquired

since the mutiny, no doubt produces nearly everything, and it must be excluded from statements intended to apply to the country generally.

About twenty-five acres can be ploughed each season by a good pair of bullocks. Camels are used as much as, and in many places more than, bullocks to draw the plough, and buffaloes and even donkeys, especially in Anúpgarh, are used for the same purpose. A fair crop of bájrā yields five British maunds to the acre; but I am unable to give the out-turn for different kinds of lands. Generally speaking, the quality of the cultivated soil varies but little, for it is so light that the surface is always shifting from the effects of the wind, and the fine blown deposits, which act as manure, tend to equalize its productive power.

Rotation of crops is, I believe, practised so far that bájrā usually follows moth. Perhaps the best-known division of land is into uneven (*tibi*) and level (*soin dharti*), the latter being much more valued than the former.

Land being unlimited the holdings are large; but I cannot tell how large a holding is equivalent to Rs. 8 a month, nor have I much to record regarding the land

tenures. But I have heard it remarked that in consequence of land being so plentiful, and owing to the wretched revenue system worth so little, there is no struggle for shares (*biswās*) as in the adjoining British districts. Cultivators sometimes take leases from the village proprietors, rent being probably fixed yearly. To oust a cultivator before the succession of crops is complete, that is after he has prepared the land for bájrā by growing moth upon it, is I believe, thought unjust.

The rents charged by the Bhūmīa thākurs are realized from the cultivators in various ways. In one village where enquiries were made the "begārs" (or village

servants at the beck of the thākur) paid a third of their crop; while the Jāts paid from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 a family, according to the number of a household, in addition to a third of the crop. Ten rupees for seventy or eighty bigās is a common rent for Banias to charge when they hold villages in farm, while smaller village proprietors often take but one-fourth the crop, or, if they supply plough cattle, half.

The Darbār's revenue rates, which are really rent rates, in fiscal villages are Rs. 10 for a hundred bigās (about twenty-four acres) from Jāts, and a rupee or two less from Rājputās, Brāhmans, and other favored castes. Where there is a spring harvest, from one-fourth to one-seventh is taken. This of course does not free the land for the autumn crop, whereas in Tibi land it occasionally bears twice in the year. In some villages the darbār takes one-fourth of the autumn crops from Jāts. It must, however, be remembered that these rates are supplemented by other irregular taxes whenever a good year makes it possible for the villages to pay more.

It is a remarkable fact that the domestic animals of Bikánir are generally either finer or more serviceable than those of any other part of India.

CATTLE.

The horses, if not fine, are strong and wiry; and I have known a very ordinary-looking mare carry its rider eighty miles through sand one day and forty the next, and then without a rest continue moderate daily journeys. Well-fed riding camels will do even more than this. They do not, however, thrive well out of the sandy tract.

Something will be said regarding the Darbār's studs under "STATE ESTABLISHMENT." The thākurs all breed horses, some of which they send to the fair at Pokhar for sale. The best camels are those of the Johar jungle near Bikánir

city, and the finest cattle come from the north, where animals colored and spotted like the English breeds are often met with. The Bhatner or Hānūmāngarh buffaloes are said to be very good, as indeed are all the cattle of that region. Pūgal cows are famous for their milk and ghi. The sheep of the district about and west of Bīkānir city are the largest, I believe, in India, and the grazing is so good that the mutton in the early part of the year is scarcely inferior to gram-fed. I am unable to estimate the number of cattle in the state with any approach to accuracy, but from statistics furnished by the Darbār and from general report, it would appear that to the north they are most numerous: thus in Anūpgarh there are said to be an average of eleven head of large cattle to a house and ten of sheep and goats. In Hānūmāngarh (*i.e.*, Bhatner) large and small average twelve to a house, in Tibi but seven, while to the south in Chūrū and Sujāngarh they average but four to a house. The number of large and the number of small seem to be generally pretty equal; but as the country has not yet got over the effects of the extraordinary famine of 1868-69, these figures should probably be trebled in order to obtain the average number of ordinary times, except to the north where the mortality was less. The camels during the famine suffered little, as was to be expected, and the sheep comparatively little, as they can live upon the roots of the grass; many of the lambs, however, died. The horses being the property of the well-off more could be done for them than for the wretched kine, of which it was estimated that nine-tenths perished for want of food and water. The average price of good plough bullocks is Rs. 20 each.

Owing to the isolated position of Bīkānir, the demand for labor in recent years for public works in British territory has not affected the price of labor in Bīkānir, and four annas a day for skilled and two annas for unskilled labor are still the normal rates.

PRICE CURRENT.

Just before the rains of 1873 prices were very high.

Moth was	...	...	...	24	seers.
Bājra ...	...	...	...	16½	"
Mūng, jāwār	}	...	...	17	"
Barley		...	...	14	"
Wheat ...	...	...	...	14	"
Ghi ...	...	...	...	1½	"

The seer of the city and towns and the tolā and māshā are three-fourths the British weights of the same name.

The kos is two thousand "pāondās" or double paces of about five and a half feet each. The highā is seventy cubits square.

Locusts are often a great scourge. The year after that of the great BLIGHTS, FLOODS, AND DROUGHTS. famine crops were extensively destroyed by them.

When rains are excessively heavy, the seed sown in the light sand is washed away and scarcity follows. But want of rain is the great source of famine, and crops fail from this cause at least once in four years.—I speak only of local failures. Such a wide-reaching visitation as that of 1868-69, when there seemed no place to fly to, does not occur often, and when it occurs forms an era by which dates are calculated in the villages.

The wild vegetable substances used for human food, especially during famines, will be found specified under "FORESTS." Of these "bharūt" is the principal.

Nowhere was the great famine of 1868-69 more fearfully felt than in

Bikánir. Early in October 1868 the starving had begun to flock into the towns, and the Seths in Sujángarh and the neighborhood established small relief funds, which were soon exhausted. But a certain amount of food was daily distributed by many of the well-to-do merchants. The thákurs are generally ill-off, and did little for their ryots; moreover, the treatment they themselves had received from the ráj had perhaps, as an intelligent villager remarked, hardened them towards their dependents.

A tank was begun by the Darbár, but labor ceased for want of funds in a few weeks, and but a small sum of money altogether could have been spent on relief works. The Mahárájá, however, distributed food for many months. The kitchen, which at first was at Bikánir, had to be removed several miles off in consequence of the numbers of dead and dying. Probably, what with starvation, sickness, and emigration, Bikánir lost permanently more than a third of its population. Of these, judging from notes made at a distribution of food, 15 per cent. were Játs, Rájpúts, and Muhammadans of Rájpút extraction: the rest were of low caste.

The cattle in many places were reduced to less than one-twentieth of what they were, especially in the western part of the state: there in the village of the principal thákur but 200 head were remaining out of 4,300 alive before the famine. In the principal cattle districts, those of Bhatner and the neighboring parganas, the loss was not so heavy; but throughout the whole state it is probable that the cattle were reduced by nine-tenths.

The distress was augmented by the pressure for revenue exerted by the Darbár, by the excessive fines and other modes of raising or saving money, such as the seizure of grass and grain for ráj purposes, the arbitrary reduction of the price current, &c. I am sorry to say, too, that the engagement to remit transit dues on grain was to a great extent disregarded.

The price of grain in Bikánir went gradually up to 6 seers the rupee, and there was little difference between the prices of the different kinds. Within the memory of living men, after a succession of bountiful harvests, stored "moth," which Banias wished to get rid of, has been sold for a rupee the camel load, and just before the famine bájrā was 35 seers (British) and moth at 45 seers. The people consider that a famine has begun when bájrā is at 15 seers. Then ten men will divide 2 seers of moth between them and mix it with berries for their one daily meal. In the terrible famines the very trees tell of the prevailing misery, for the "khejrā" are seen stripped, not only of their leaves but to a great extent of their bark, to supply food to the starving.

There are no made roads in Bikánir, with the exception of a mile or so near the city in the direction of Gajner. All journeying involves a struggle through the heavy sand, which however in the tracks of carts and camels is beneath the surface somewhat hardened by pressure. Goods are of course carried on camels, but the roads though heavy are quite passable for carts if sufficient traction-power be applied; and the rich travel with great comfort in the easy country "rath" or light travelling cart, lines of which drawn by magnificent bullocks are often met with. The principal routes are as follow:—

From Bikánir to Ajmir, about 150 miles.

Bikánir to Deshnuk, 16 miles; shops and good water at Deshnuk.

Deshnuk to Charkara, 20 miles; shops and good water.

Rest of journey through Jodhpur territory.

From Bikanir to Bahwálpúr, about 150 miles.

Bikanir to Badrásar, 15 miles; good water, but no shops.

Karnisar, 14 miles; water bad; no shops.

Púgal, 20 miles; water good and shops (a line here branches off to Jaisalmír).

Maujgarh in Báhwálpúr territory, 60 miles; water and shops; intervening country waste.

From Bikanir to Bhiwáni, 180 miles.

The places are not marked on the map, and the distances are therefore not given in miles.

Bikanir, to Karnisar, 12 kos; water good and shops.

Kálú, 12 kos; water good and shops.

Bahádursar, 16 kos, ditto.

Sardárgarh, 8 kos, ditto.

Reni, 14 kos, ditto.

Rájgarh, 14 kos, ditto.

Khúrd Kot, 8 kos, ditto.

Bikanir to Sirsá, 160 miles.

Bikanir to Málhásar, 10 kos; water good and shops.

Khari, 12 kos, ditto.

Nathwán, 8 kos; good water but no shops.

Sai, 14 kos; bad water and no shops.

Shekhsar, 16 kos; good water and shops.

Palú, 16 kos, ditto.

Nohar, 18 kos, ditto.

Jamálki, 10 kos, in British territory.

Fuel is procurable everywhere but on the Múltán route: there it is procurable at Púgal alone. The "kos" is slightly under two miles, and as until the Bikanir topographical survey is finished precision in distances is not always possible, I prefer giving some in "kos" rather than in miles.

Captain Burton's report for 1872-73 contains much that is new and extremely interesting on Bikanir commerce. An abstract will be found in an Appendix: had it arrived earlier it would have taken the place of much that I have written on the subject.

I have already mentioned the useless copper mine near Bidásar, a few miles from Sujángarh. Whether it was ever worked profitably I do not know, but its discovery in Sambat 1809 (A. D. 1753) created much interest at the time. The red sandstone quarries of Khari, thirty miles to the north-east of the city, are eight in number, four of which are worked by Hindús and four by Musalmáns. The stone is excellent, and, as they have been worked for hundreds of years, the excavations are deep and extensive.

In all the quarries, at a depth of about fifty feet, a damp warm wind issues from crevices in the rock. The quarrymen are about forty in number. Fifteen and a half maunds of stones, *i.e.*, two camel-loads, are sold for Rs. 4-5-6, of which the quarrymen get Re. 1, the carriers Rs. 2, and the state Re. 1-5-6.

The "*Múltáni mitti*" or fuller's-earth excavated at village Meth, near Koláth, employs twenty-five persons, who receive three annas a camel-load, while the Darbár takes Re. 1-8. It is said that about two thousand camel-loads are

taken away in the course of the year, but I suspect that is an under-estimate, as in two days I myself met seven or eight hundred camels laden with mitti on their way to Sirsá, where it sells, I was told, at one rupee a maund.

Lime is excavated near most of the towns: it is generally soft and very inferior to the lime of Jaipur. That which the city depends on comes chiefly from the north. The village of Jállásar, a few miles from Bikánir, is maintained by the trade. A siliceous conglomerate (*bir buriya*) is used to some extent for building, and in the ravines near the city beds of a red and very tenacious clay is found, which is used for plastering mud houses and gives a curious appearance to parts of the city.

The principal manufactures are those of blankets and sweetmeats: the latter of course from imported sugar, which is worked up into a great variety of sweetmeats so superior to any produced elsewhere that large quantities are exported. Rain water is used in refining the sugar, and not that of the deep wells as has been supposed. "Ghi," wool, and cattle are exported to a considerable extent, and piece-goods, "kiraná" (groceries), jewelry, and metals, precious and other, are the chief imports; but it is extremely difficult to ascertain particulars regarding the trade with any accuracy. See pages 135 and appendix.

CAPITAL AND INTEREST. Except by the officials who plunder the people, little money is made in Bikánir.

The piece-goods and other local trade is chiefly in the hands of Aggar-wálás, and there can be no further profitable investments for realized capital. Formerly, by grants of lands at favorable rates, immunity from custom dues, and other encouragements, merchants have been induced by the Rájá of the day to settle in new towns and invest money in building and agriculture; and there is no doubt that if the merchants could trust the Darbár, many would be glad to take grants of waste lands, attract cultivators, and thus, by diminishing the vast unutilized tracts, to contribute in the best possible way to the prosperity of the state.

At present the wealth brought into the country by the merchants whose houses of business are at the great seats of commerce is expended chiefly in great entertainments of Bráhmans or of the castes of the owners, or it is hoarded in the shape of jewels and ornaments. The Darbár would often gladly borrow a few lakhs, but its credit is so bad that speculators will now rarely lend to it.

A school, which contains three hundred students in Persian and Hindi, has

EDUCATION. recently been established. Previously the only places of education were the temples, Jain monasteries, and of "patshálás." At the last the sons of many of the wealthy merchants are taught to read, write, and cipher. Their whole school equipment is a board and a bit of wood, and their studies are usually conducted on a shady side of the street. The "patshálás" are not so well attended now as formerly, for within the last fifteen years it has become the fashion to take the boys from school immediately after marriage and send them to their parents' distant homes of business, thus fitting them to take a part in mercantile operations, lately so extended, at an age when they used to begin their apprenticeship. At the "patshálás" a course of letter-reading and accounts takes about three years. The school fees amount to six maunds of hájrá and Rs. 8 cash for the whole period. The wealthy pay in the shape of a present about Rs. 100 additional.

At the "upásarás" or Jain monasteries Sanscrit is studied, and in one that I entered I found the priest, who was courteous and communicative, and ready to permit access to his large Sanscrit library, teaching geography

from a curious map (which showed the concentric oceans and continents lakhs of kos across) and history to match. A copy of the map was sent to the Kensington Exhibition of 1871, and attracted some notice. At one or two mosques the Korán, I believe, is taught to a few boys.

The temples distribute something to the poor. During the great famine CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS. I saw the hungry getting relief at one, but their cost to the state and the public is altogether out of proportion to the charity they dispense.

The palace, the Jain "upásarás" (monasteries), particularly one called the "Acháráji Gatchká," and the Dhuni Náth temple LIBRARIES. contain thousands of Sanscrit manuscripts, which, I believe, are being catalogued by a competent pandit with a view to making public their character and contents. Although one would expect to find suspicion and prejudice rampant in a remote state like Bikanír, it is remarkable that none of the objections to making libraries accessible met with elsewhere were offered in Bikanír. The Maharájá at my request ordered the chests of books which had lain for generations untouched to be opened, and examination showed that some had actually turned to dust from lapse of time, though insects had been kept from them. Many of these books were bought by Rájá Anúp Singh when the Emperor Aurangzeb was destroying every Sanscrit work he could lay his hands on. At Bikanír they were safe from everything but time. In the Jain monastery, Acháráji Gatchká, when I expressed a hope that the Srí Púji or Jain priest would not object to his books being rendered available to the public, his reply was: "Examine them by all means; the more you work a well the purer the water." At Bhatner in A. D. 1847 General Cunningham saw a number of palm-leaf manuscripts believed to be Jain. They are not now there. It is desirable that their fate should be discovered. The completion of the catalogues above referred to probably depends upon the sustained interest shown in it.*

The total revenue and expenditure for the Sambat year 1929 (A. D. 1872-73) is shown in the following statement REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE. supplied by Captain Burton, Assistant Agent, Governor General:—

* In 1873-74, Dr. G. Buhler of Bombay, made a tour through Western Rájputana in search of Sanskrit manuscripts. Bikanír furnished many valuable books. From the Rájá's library copies of very rare vedic works, among them the Práti-sakhyas of the Atharva Veda, and the Nátya sástra of Bharata were obtained. Besides, one hundred and twenty manuscripts were purchased for Government referring chiefly to the Jaina religion. But also some exceedingly rare Brahmanical books, such as Yuza purána of the Gargi Sanshita and a large portion of the Nyása, a Bandha commentary of the Kásika Vrittí were secured. (*Asiatic Society's Journal*).

Cash Account of the Bikanir State for the

RECEIPTS													
No.	DESCRIPTION				Sadar.			Mofussil.			TOTAL.		
					Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
1	Land revenue (mál)	...	...	...	6,782	14	0	3,99,133	8	9	4,05,916	6	9
2	Custom dues	...	...	...	1,03,145	9	3	79,577	3	9	1,82,722	13	0
3	"Nazrána" on account of the succession of the new Mahárájá	...	...	...	47,617	0	3	...	...	...	47,617	0	3
4	"Nazrána" or kind of fine	...	...	...	6,906	0	6	4,128	12	0	11,034	12	6
5	"Faujdári" fines	...	...	...	8,114	0	9	21,030	9	3	29,144	10	0
6	"Diwáni" or civil fees	...	...	...	1,598	14	9	1,827	0	0	3,425	14	9
7	Sale-proceeds of land	...	...	...	18,046	11	3	8,749	4	0	26,795	15	3
8	"Khola" or tax on the adoption of a son	...	...	...	3,451	0	0	801	0	0	4,252	0	0
9	"Gaimál" or unclaimed property	...	...	...	1,221	11	6	1,179	2	6	2,400	14	0
10	"Kasráti niran," deductions from bills for fodder of darbár camels on account of supposed overcharges	...	...	...	1,968	0	0	114	8	0	2,082	8	0
11	Nazars	...	...	...	8,148	0	0	86	0	0	8,235	0	0
12	"Páncharái" or grazing tax	...	...	...	4,138	10	0	2,117	7	9	6,256	1	9
13	"Talbaná" or summons fees	...	...	...	1,614	8	0	2,961	5	6	4,575	14	0
14	"Singhoti" or tax on sheep	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,409	14	0	1,409	14	0
15	Stamp duty	...	...	...	542	5	9	197	13	6	740	3	3
16	Mint	...	...	...	349	0	6	...	...	...	349	0	6
17	Income tax on the pay of ráj servants at one anna per rupee	...	...	...	487	11	0	4,708	6	3	5,196	1	3
18	Interest, discount, &c.,	...	...	...	4,559	10	3	2,112	4	6	6,671	14	9
19	Taxes on trades and license taxes miscellaneous	...	...	...	23,223	6	6	9,045	6	0	32,268	12	6
20	Received from Ráwat Singh	...	...	...	68,660	13	9	...	...	...	68,660	13	9
21	Loans	...	...	...	1,88,925	11	9	...	...	...	1,88,925	11	9
TOTAL					4,51,932	5	9	5,86,750	0	3	10,38,682	6	0

Sambat year 1929 or A. D. 1872-73.

ISSUES

No.	DESCRIPTION.	Sadar.			Mofussil.			TOTAL.		
		Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
1	By "Arogan Thákurji," articles of food supplied to certain religious institutions according to fixed scales	26,006	2	6	3,199	12	6	29,205	15	0
2	"Modhikháná" or royal kitchen and rations, includes feed of darbár horses, rations to "Silah poshes," &c.	59,015	10	6	68,535	8	0	1,27,551	2	6
3	"Tuwaila" or royal stable	39,574	11	0	...	...	...	39,574	11	0
4	"Feelkháná" or elephants	14,518	7	0	...	...	...	14,518	7	0
5	"Kirkrikhana" or birds, &c.	2,045	8	9	...	...	...	2,045	3	9
6	Grass and fodder for horses, &c.	21,695	12	6	6,307	5	3	28,003	1	9
7	"Toshakhana" or "Bara Karkhánas"	18,916	3	9	...	...	...	18,916	3	9
8	"Kilkhana" or Public Works Department	12,888	11	6	902	9	6	13,791	5	0
9	"Kosan" or establishment of bullocks for drawing out drinking and other water	4,882	4	6	...	...	...	4,882	4	6
10	"Rathkhana," native carriages including feed of bullocks and establishment, &c.	5,548	0	0	...	...	...	5,548	0	0
11	"Baggikháná," European carriages	2,185	3	6	...	...	...	2,185	3	6
12	"Shutarkhana," camels	6,545	10	9	492	3	9	7,037	14	6
13	"Topkhana" or artillery	8,649	4	0	67	15	0	8,717	3	0
14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	"Farráshkháná" or Tent Department	6,247	6	6	2,620	12	9	8,868	3	3
16	Stationery	470	5	9	743	11	6	1,214	1	3
17	"Kásidi" or postal expenses	294	5	0	1,310	8	3	1,604	13	3
18	"Mandi," including the establishment, &c.	9,496	13	0	...	...	...	9,496	13	0
19	"Gangajali" or storhouse for the Mahárája's drinking water	743	5	0	...	...	...	743	5	0
20	"Kotwáli," including the pay of the establishment, police, &c.	4,514	0	0	...	...	...	4,514	0	0
21	Purchases of new camels, bullocks	630	0	0	610	0	0	1,240	0	0
22	Gajner garden expenses	1,948	0	0	...	...	...	1,948	0	0
23	Sheobari ditto	805	8	0	...	...	...	805	8	0
24	Vakils	24,435	0	9	...	...	...	24,435	0	9
25	Civil establishment, including chelas hazuris, &c., includes pay of the troops, &c.	54,003	6	3	91,507	12	9	1,45,511	3	0
26	Troops	1,94,305	6	0	...	...	...	1,94,305	6	0
27	Mint	513	14	6	...	...	...	513	14	6
28	Obsequies of the late Mahárája	1,06,731	3	3	8,953	15	0	1,15,685	2	3
29	Ditto of the Máji Púgalioniji or Dowager Ráni from Púgal	25,119	9	3	...	...	...	25,119	9	3
30	Miscellaneous, includes expenses incurred on account of—(1) guests, (2) pecuniary assistance given to thákurs and officials on deaths, &c., (3) installation expenses, (4) petty expenses	74,776	3	6	2,756	5	0	77,532	8	6
31	Interest, &c.	4,355	13	6	222	3	0	4,578	0	6
32	By loans repaid	1,25,356	7	6	...	...	...	1,25,356	7	6
		8,49,408	2	0	1,88,230	14	0	1,037,638	0	0
	Balance	1,040	6	0	...	...	...	1,043	6	0
	TOTAL	8,50,451	8	0	1,88,230	14	0	1,038,682	6	0

LAND REVENUE.

The land revenue, or at least the portion paid by thákurs holding estates under grant, is called "rakm."

As already detailed under "RENT RATES," it is realized partly in cash and partly in kind, and does not consist wholly of the rental or a part of it, but is supplemented by a number of miscellaneous taxes, which are irregularly levied very much at the pleasure of the district collectors. Exclusive of cesses for village expenses, I have met with twenty different kinds, though I believe that not more than thirteen are levied from any one class. A list of the supplementary taxes will be found in an Appendix.

No settlement of the land revenue has ever been made, except with some of the principal thákurs,* a detail of which will be found at page 79 of Part I. In the Tibí pargana, which was granted by the British Government to Bíkánir in 1861, the Darbár at first cancelled the settlement, which had several years to run; but after a great deal of discussion the darbár was induced to respect it, and to defer the date of its expiry for as many years beyond the date originally fixed as after the transfer of the villages it had remained in abeyance.

Captain Burton thus describes the mode of collecting the revenue in fiscal villages:—

"Collections are usually made in the following manner. Just before the revenue becomes due the tahsildár (usually called havildár) summonses the ryots or 'chaudharis' of villages and the leading mahájans of the pargana, and on their arrival demands a certain large sum from each village: negotiations ensue, and end in the mahájan advancing the amount agreed on to the tahsildárs, who (generally) instead of remitting it at once to the capital make use of it in private investments. The mahájan then becomes the collector of the revenue of the villages for which he has paid; and, as a matter of course, is assisted by the tahsildárs, who furnishes him with horse and camel men to enable him to oppress and despoil the ryots. In some tahsáls the mahájan agency is more resorted to than in others. The collection in kind are made in a similar arbitrary manner. The unfortunate ryot is left to the mercy of the havildár and the appraiser who accompanies him to inspect the crops."

In the villages held under grant as jágirs the Darbár levied cesses in addition to the sums taken by the grantee. The villages, which are very numerous, were divided into circles, called "chirás," in which no ráj official was regularly resident. But at a certain season of the year a person, called "chiráyat," was appointed to make a tour in each "chirá," where he had almost unrestrained power to collect all he could under various heads, which left nothing untouched and could be added to almost at pleasure.

The hákims over the fiscal villages, rapacious as they are, yet live among the people, and to some extent feel themselves bound not quite to ruin their parganas. But there was no check on the greed of the "chiráyats," who paid only periodical visits and who were unshackled by rules. The outcry against these people was very great and one of the causes of the disaffection amongst the jágirdár thákurs. Under the settlement made with them (see last two pages of Part I) the "chiráyat" system was to be abolished and the

* The last annual report of the Sújángarh Agency mentions the settlement of the Hanúmágarh pargana and an almost general settlement with the thákurs on the principle of that first introduced.

jágir villages to pay revenue to their jágirdárs only, but I fear the engagement has been partly evaded. The system of taxing jágir villages extensively is, so far as I know, peculiar to Bikanír. It would not be tolerated by the important thákurs of the adjoining states.

The following figures show the comparative state of the collections of land revenue within nine years, viz., from Sambat 1918 to 1926 (A. D. 1870):—

Sambat.	Year A. D.	Amount.	Sambat.	Year A. D.	Amount.
1918	1862	Rs. 3,79,270	1923	1867	Rs. 5,98,195
1919	1863	„ 4,16,070	1924	1868	„ 7,21,666
1920	1864	„ 5,67,820	1925	1869	„ 4,26,191
1921	1865	„ 4,24,405	1926	1870	„ 4,59,361
1922	1866	„ 4,74,967			

Generally speaking, about a third of this revenue is derived from the fiscal villages and the rest from the estates of the thákurs.

The second item of revenue is the customs, which, as shown below includes several items besides customs proper. In Sambat 1926 (A. D. 1870) the collections under this head amounted to Rs. 424,100, derived from the following sources:—

Customs proper, i.e., import and export duties of the city mandi or market, including sums derived from fairs in the environs of the city and some miscellaneous taxes on trade	...	...	...	Rs.
From the out posts connected with the city mandi	...	...	...	88,453
Collections made in the district customs stations	...	...	...	47,664
				1,70,417
			TOTAL	3,06,534

Other taxes included under "Customs"—

"Chauth zamín," or tax on the sale of land at quarter share of the sale proceeds	...	...	...	Rs.
"Kholá," or tax on the adoption of a son	...	...	...	30,489
"Gaimál," or proceeds of unclaimed property	...	...	...	38,837
Miscellaneous items	...	...	...	19,887
				28,353
			TOTAL	1,17,566
			GRAND TOTAL	4,24,100

A detailed statement for the whole state worth insertion is not forthcoming. Under "CITY BIKANIR" will be found details of the city customs yield.

Captain Burton has in his report for 1872-73 some interesting remarks on the above taxes, showing the previous system, or no system, under which they were levied, and mentioning curious details. Thus, he mentions that among the taxes on trade is one called "afim-ka-saudá," or licence-tax on opium time-bargains, and "menh-ka-saudá," or license-tax on wagers dependent on the rainfall.

For list of other taxes, *vide* Appendix II.

NUMBER OF ESTATES. No details regarding the number of holdings, &c., can be furnished, except as regards thákur's estates.

The traditionary number of establishments, first organized, I believe, under Rájá Rái Singh in the time of Akbar, is thirty-six.

ESTABLISHMENTS. They apparently included only the minor departments, as neither the army nor the administration of the state are alluded to in the rhyming lines which detail the "chhattis kárkhaná."

The division into thirty-six is quite fanciful, and in the following notice of the establishments the classification of the darbār is disregarded.

During the latter part of the late Mahārājā Sardār Singh's life-time the administration of justice was carried on in a very "loose and unsatisfactory manner." The chief permitted all sorts of persons to interfere in both civil and criminal cases, and a few words sent through a golā (or slave) were sufficient to subvert the decision of the minister in any case or under any circumstances.

The system of selling offices, and of allowing officials to absorb wealth by dishonest means with a view to squeezing them when full, must prevent both revenue or judicial administration from being satisfactory. Now and then a minister, either from virtue or superstition, swears that place shall bring him no secret gain, but the community think a native is quite virtuous enough if in cases entrusted to him he favors and takes money from one party only, and that from the party who should justly win and does win. Since the death of Mahārājā Sardār Singh the Council has established three courts—

1st.—A revenue court (kacherī, māl).

2nd.—A criminal court (faujdāri).

3rd.—A civil court (dīwāni).

The two first only settle unimportant cases. Others are determined by the Administrative Council of the state, which consist of five members (*vide* "OFFICIALS").

The troops have, since the death of the late Mahārājā in 1872, been a good deal reduced. Their cost is now less than a lakh a year, but this is exclusive of the horse and foot employed in the districts and forts. The detail is as follows:—

				Men.	Rs.
Horse	...	...	...	228	cost 4,440 monthly.
Foot	...	...	...	593	" 3,448 do.
Pensioners, &c.	...	...	...	46	" 460 do.
TOTAL				867	... 8,348 monthly.

and between thirty and forty guns of various sizes. The additional horse and foot in the districts number 1,060.

The pay of the foot varies from Rs. 2 to 5 a month. The district horse, called "Sillahposh," get Rs. 2 a month and rations. Their officers, about 350 in number, are rather a remarkable body, being Parihar Rājputs descended from the men "whose first leader was Bika, Master of the Horse during his struggle, four hundred years ago, for the territory which forms the Bikanir State." They consider their title to pay and maintenance out of the revenues of Bikanir as strong as the Mahārājā's to the chiefship. "*Taro pāth, māro thāth*" (dignity yours, service ours) is their motto.

The other horse is chiefly Rāthor. Half the infantry are foreign Hindustānis and are known as "Pardesis" and of the rest many are Kāim Khānis (a class of Musalmāns of Rājput origin to be hereafter spoken of in the Jaipur Gazetteer), of Rājput origin, and Saiyads who have had a firm footing ever since Karān Singh's time (see History, page 37). The artillery have little practice, but could use their guns tolerably. There are troops furnished by the jāgirdārs, who pay "rakm" or revenue in commutation of such service.

Formerly the poor prisoners were unregistered and lived by charity, the kotwāl merely guarding them. The low-caste ones were sometimes chained up like dogs in the open plain unprovided with kennels, others were confined in the kotwāl, and the better class in the fort, where, though space was narrow and sanitation

JAILS.

disregarded, sufficient food was supplied. Their place of confinement, called "Netásar," has been for many generations the state prison. Latterly, through the influence of Captain Burton and Pandit Manphúl, improvements have been effected. Most of the prisoners are now kept in the kotwáli, where some work and receive extra food, and all get a sufficiency both of food and clothing, while the sick are well cared for. Long-termed prisoners are now confined in a place called the "Dharmapura," but none of these three places deserve the name of jail: they are simply lock-ups.

Báoris, Minas, and Thoris are the criminal classes of the state. They are

CRIMINAL CLASSES. often maintained and employed by robber thákurs, who supply them with horses and camels and conceal the plunder. The principal temples, the residences of saints, and the quarters of the principal thákurs and the Maharájá's near relations are all sanctuaries (sarná); but they are not inviolable, for even Deshnuk, the most sacred in the state, has within the last four years been disregarded on a criminal taking refuge there who was required by a British court of justice. For more on the subject of crime see page 112.

There was no "taksál" or mint at Bikánír until the time of Maharájá

MINT. Gaj Singh, who ruled in Bikánír from 1746 to 1787. Prior to his time the current coin was the Farrúkh Sháhí rupee. It is said that the imperial sanction was given to the establishment of the mint at Bikánír, but probably at that period it was not thought worth asking for. However, the coins were struck in the name of the Emperor Muhammad Sháh Alam, and continued to be so until ten years ago, when for the name of the Delhi Emperor was substituted Queen Victoria—"Aurángarái Hind." Silver and copper coin are both struck, but the former alone can be considered current, as the latter vary in value and the place of their manufacture is distinct from the mint. Rupees have been struck under four Maharájas, and the "Gaj Sháhí," "Surat Sháhí," "Ratan Sháhí," and "Sardár Sháhí" are all at present current. Each coin bears the device of the reigning Maharájá, as well as of those who preceded him since the establishment of the mint. A full account of the process of coining is on record in the Sujángarh Agency Office.

The commissariat expenses are large, as rations (peteas) are issued daily

COMMISSARIAT. to a number of persons, servants and others, at Bikánír, and there are usually more than twenty-five elephants and a large number of cattle to maintain. Moreover rations are allowed to all the hereditary "sawárs" and others employed in the tehsils, the whole expenses of which, including pay, is deducted from the collections before their transmission to the darbár, so that one important class of employees get

STABLES AND STUDS. both food and pay regularly. Of elephants there are usually thirty, each of which receives six maunds of grass daily and a maund of wheat flour, a seer of ghí, and a seer and a quarter of gúr.

There are studs of horses at Chápar and Hanúmágarh to the east and north-east of the city, but the principal one is that of Johar, about six miles from Bikánír, where excellent horses and oxen and the best riding camels in India are bred. About three hundred mares range the brushwood, getting grain when they choose to come to the enclosure for it. The camels too roam at will, being branded and without nose-strings.

The post office at Bikánír is not directly under the Post Master General,

POST OFFICE. though he is consulted as regards the appointment of the contractor who conveys letters from Sujángarh,

where there is a regular post office, to Bikanir. Ratángarh Chúrú and Bidadás Chúrú likewise have post offices under the Post Master General. The covers received and despatched in the city during the first-half of 1873 were 57,750.

Darbár postal establishment. The Darbár maintains an establishment of postal runners, called "kássids," under a jemadár. The speed at which these runners of the desert, who are still much used by the wealthy, will accomplish long distances on foot is marvellous. Assisted by a camel for only a fourth of the distance (camels are posted at certain villages on the main routes for their convenience, and they make their meals whilst riding), they will as a regular thing travel 170 miles (100 kos is the distance between Bikanir and Jaipur) in three days and three nights, for which they receive Rs. 9 but if necessary they will go that distance in forty-two hours, for which Rs. 32 would be paid. Usually two "kássids" travel together in case one should break down. Captain Burton, quoting the jemadár, writes: "The quickest rate at which a kássid on foot has been known to travel in this country is 50 kos (85 miles) in eight "pahars" (twenty-four hours). This was some years ago. Now a first-rate "kássid" will not do more than 40 kos in that time. The average rate on foot is 25 or 30 kos (40 or 50 miles) without stopping."

There are no statistics available to show the precise number of villages in ANCIENT NUMBER OF VIL- former times, but Bika, whose dominions had LAGES.

about the same limits as those of the state as it now is, is said in round numbers to have had 3,000 villages under his sway: the present number is 1814, and there is no doubt that many have been abandoned through mal-administration. A generation of good government would greatly increase the population and improve the revenue.

The prevailing wind in the latitude of the city is from the west, so much so that the inscriptions on old memorial METEOROLOGICAL ACCOUNT. pillars in the villages of the country are, owing to the action of drifting sand, much more worn when they have a western aspect than when they face any other quarter. The only year for which there is any meteorological record is 1872, during which a rainfall of 10.10 inches was reported by Captain Burton.

Guinea-worm is one of the commonest complaints, and in the city of

DISEASES.

Bikanir syphilis is very prevalent. Few, it is said, whether men or women, have escaped it. Cholera occasionally visits the state, and a detachment of the Deoli force at Sujángarh suffered severely from "Berí beri or the bad sickness of Ceylon" in 1868.

Dr. Moore in 1873 remarks: "Notwithstanding all that has been said apparently tending to the contrary, Bikanir cannot but be regarded as, for natives at least, a more than ordinarily healthy locality. This has been already generally attributed to free perfilation of pure air and to good water, but something must be credited to the population being generally well off (?) in consequence of the various profitable employments which exist, and to the readiness of the poorer classes to fall back on the famine foods which the untilled tracts afford. Doubtless to natives of some other parts of India the dry climate of Bikanir, and to the European the frightful intensity of the hot-weather, would render the climate extremely trying—even natives dying from sunstroke and fever at this period.* The dispensary returns, both for the last and former year, show a smaller ratio of malarious fevers than in many other places, and although both intermittent and remittent are common enough, the type does not appear usually severe, and spleen complications

*Mr. Elphinstone passing in the cold-season in 1808 through Bikanir with a large Hindústani escort found the country very unhealthy; but Lieutenant Boileau in May 1835 met with little sickness though the thermometer in a tent stood at 120°.

"are not markedly prevalent. The fact, however, of these so-called malarious diseases prevailing at all at such a locality as Bikánir, where there is neither living jungle nor dead vegetation, where the rainfall is so small and water so far from the surface, must be perhaps accepted as an additional argument to the many now advanced, that some other conditions than those conveyed by the term malarious are requisite for the production of paroxysmal maladies. Again, guinea-worm is during some years very prevalent both at Bikánir and in neighboring villages, where the water is even further from the surface, facts not altogether affording confirmatory evidence of the opinion that the ova of the guinea-worm inhabit the slimy mud on the steps of baolies or wells.

"The Bikánir dispensary, now in the second year of its progress, is situated near the Gogo Darwaza or gate of the city; and although therefore not so centrally placed as it should be, is a spacious building and sufficiently well adapted for the purpose: hitherto want of funds has prevented the reception of in-door patients. The Native doctor, Lachman Pandey, formerly at Sirohi, is, if not most capable, very careful and pains-taking, and is well spoken of by Captain Burton and the ráj officials. The institution is undoubtedly popular, and as time passes will certainly, if suitably maintained, become more so."

An English surgeon named Dr. Coleridge was resident at Bikánir for twenty years as the Maharájá's physician. Two of his sons were also in the Maharájá's service, and more than one member of his family died at Bikánir. He was useful to and valued as a medical adviser by the native community; for the benefit of whom he established a small dispensary. He left for England in January 1869.

At Koláth in Kátik Punam (October) a fair takes place, at which sixty thousand people assemble. Koláth is a place of pilgrimage, where there is a tank which has fifty-two gháts: it is sacred to a saint named Muni Kapól Munji. Horses, camels, &c., are sold. This is the principal fair of the state.

At Korámdesar on Bhádon Sudí 13th (August) ten thousand people assemble, but there is little trading.

At Uderámsar, near the city, in Bhádon Sudí Punam, a Jain fair is held; no trading.

At Devi Kund, the cremation tank of Bikánir chiefs, there is a fair in Bhádon, which lasts for a month, and all kinds of things are sold. The gathering is in honor of the last satí, a young Udeypúr princess (*vide* "DEVI KUND").

At "Sahansarláo" or "hundred-wheeled tank," near the city, on Sanwan 4th (July) there is a fair, but little trading.

At Gaisulál tank, near the city, on Sanwan 3rd, there is a fair, but little trading.

At Harsolai tank, near the city, on Sanwan Sud 9th.

At Súján Desar, near the city, there are two fairs in the course of the year, but little trading.

Fairs also take place at the temples of Lakhmináth, Dhuninath, and Narsingha, all in the city, in the months of Bhádon, Chet, and Baisákh, respectively.

At Dadrewa in Rajgarh on 9th Bhádon (August) a fair in honor of a Musalmán Chohan saint, named Goga, is held. Little trading is done; people visit the shrine and go there way. Goga Chohan is much worshipped in Rájputáná and the North-Western Provinces, and is famous in the desert

to the north. He is said to have held sway from Hansi to the Satlaj, on which was his capital Mahera. Though a Musalmán he is said to have gained his fame and to have fallen in opposing Mahmúd. For more about him see *Hissár Gazetteer*. Tod speaks of "Goga-ka-thal" or Goga's sandy region, and in Bikánir city there is a Goga gate and Goga tank.

There are in the Bikánir State 11 tahsils, consisting chiefly of fiscal villages, and 13 chirás, containing villages held in grant.

The detail is as follows:—

No.	Names of tahsils, &c.	Villages in grant		Total	Khalásá	Total	Names of principal towns and villages	REMARKS
		Pay revenue to the ráj	Revenue-free					
<i>In the North.</i>								
1	Anúgarh	9	6	15	22	37		
2	Sardágarh ... ..	...	4	4	21	25		
3	Suratgarh ... ..	...	2	2	26	28		
4	Hánúmágarh ... ..	...	19	19	91	110		
5	Tibi ... ..	...	...	...	42	42		
6	Siakhkoti (Chirá)	85	10	95	...	95		
7	Mahájan (do.)	68	1	69	...	69		
8	Shekhsar	55	39	94	...	94		
<i>In the North-east.</i>								
9	Nohar	100	17	117	7	124		
10	Bahádrán	3	13	16	68	84		
<i>In the East.</i>								
11	Rájgarh	78	17	95	62	157		
12	Rení	100	24	124	3	127		
13	Chúrú	4	5	9	4	13		
14	Sardár Shahar ... ..	...	...	...	2	2		
15	Rájáhad (Chirá)	21	11	32	...	32		
16	Sujágarh (including Bidahad).	193	2	195	3	198		
17	Gosámsar (Chirá)	32	39	71	1	72		
18	Jaisámsar (do.)	43	43	86	...	86		
19	Khejrán (do.)	57	23	80	6	86		
20	Khálsá Chirá (sequestrated villages) ... ..	...	5	5	13	18		
<i>In the West.</i>								
21	Magrá (Chirá)	53	34	87	3	90		
22	Khári Pattí (Chirá)	24	21	45	...	45		
<i>Scattered.</i>								
23	Hazúrían (Chirá) servants.	72	1	73	...	73		
24	Akran (do.)	65	3	68	...	68		Consisting of Charans, Parohits, &c., villages.
25	Ratágarh ... ..	...	1	1	...	1		A considerable town held in grant by Thákur Jai Singh of Dundlod; formerly a separate tahsil.
26	Púgal (a fief) ... ..	...	44	44	...	44		
TOTAL VILLAGES		1,062	384	1,446	386	1,814		

PART III

THE DARBAR, ARISTOCRACY, AND OFFICIAL CLASSES.

The Mahārājā of Bikanīr claims to be head of the Ráthor clan, and therefore to take precedence of Jodhpúr on the grounds set forth at pages 12 and 13 of the History. Whether the claim is just or not I will not undertake to say.

Each state has at different times taken possession of the capital of the other, Jodhpúr has most often been in a position to act as aggressor, and, in addition to the one successful invasion, has several times besieged the fort of Bikanīr without success. The British Government has allowed to each state the same salute, *viz.*, seventeen guns. The part the Bikanīr State played in the time of Akbar, when in acknowledgment of his services in Gújrat or in other ways the emperor bestowed on Rao Rái Singh extensive territories, and it is said the title of Rájā, together with the wealth that the Dakhan commands brought into the country, raised the pretensions and expenditure of the darbār to such an extent that even now the effect is felt, and extravagant habits have long prevailed which for generations have kept the state in debt. Insignia of honor, called "máhi maratib," were twice conferred on the Bikanīr chief by the Múghals—first, on Anúp Singh after a successful campaign in the Dakhan; and second, on Gaj Singh for services to the empire. The insignia were not identical, and the precise degree of honor conferred I do not know. In Akbar's time Rái Singh of Bikanīr had a place on the list of man-sabdar, higher than that of any other Hindú, except the ruling family of Amer.

It may be taken for granted that every Bikanīr chief will first aim at being recognized by the British Government as head of the Ráthors, and failing that at avoiding any settlement of the question of precedence as regards himself and the Jodhpúr chief. Wily flatterers will tell him that the fifty-two parganas of Rái Singh may again belong to Bikanīr, or that at any rate the recovery of the border villages specified at page 81 is not impossible; and if he is an unwise man, he will be persuaded that these matters are not finally settled.

On the Naurátrā of Chet and Asoj (March and September) and the Satami of Mágh (January), all in honor of Devi, the Mahārājā goes in state to temples within the precincts of the fort. Chet Sud 7th, Phagan Sud 11th (February), he visits the temples of Nágníji (an aspect of Devi) and Lakshmi Narain respectively.

On the full moon of Asárh (July), called the "gur puno," the Mahārājā proceeds to and worships the cenotaphs of his ancestors at Devi Kund. On his birthday the procession is to the Sri Ráj Ratan Bihári temple, described elsewhere.

On the Dasahra the chief goes to worship a khejrā tree (in connection with an incident of Rām Chandra's career), where the effigy of Rāwan is shot with arrows. This is the only occasion on which the "māhī marātib," or fish insignia received by Rājās Anup Singh and Gaj Singh from the Mughal emperors are brought out.

When intercourse between the British Government and Bikanir was first established, there were three thākurs with very large estates—Mahājan, Bahādrān, and Chūrū.

ARISTOCRACY.

Mahājan is about half-way between Bikanir and the Sirsā border: the estate comprises nominally one hundred and forty villages, but of many nothing but their sites remain.

The Thākur of Bahādrān at the time I allude to had more than a hundred villages situated on the Hissār border, and he was, when disposed to plunder, in a position to be particularly troublesome to British territory.

Chūrū had eighty villages, and, being on the Shekhawātī border, had a good base of operations for retaliating when forced to abandon his fort.

Besides these three, there were, and are, no thākurs with more than thirty villages, and but a few who held more than a dozen; but Bidāwats, whose country extends along part of the Mārwar and Shekhawātī borders (see "SÚ-JANGARH"), and the Sringot Bikaś, near the north-east boundary, were formidable clans.

The Bidāwats especially are addicted to plundering.

Mahārājā Sūrat Singh, great-grandfather of the present chief, was a prince of much vigor, and in the early part of his reign he was successful against his enemies abroad, and reduced his thākurs to subjection at home. Chūrū was taken, custom dues were exacted from the Bidāwats, many of the refractory were deprived of their estates, and some were imprisoned and put to death. But after a time the ousted owners, with the aid of others, recovered their estates, plundered the country, and defied the Darbār. At length the assistance of the British Government was solicited, the treaty of 1818 was concluded, and a British force entered Bikanir. It restored some twelve forts to the Darbār, extending from near Hissār to Sūjāgarh, and entirely re-established the Darbār's authority. Chūrū and Bahādrān were both confiscated, but for many years there was no approach to order throughout the state. British troops had to co-operate with the Darbār against the outlaws, and assistance in various ways was accorded.

In 1834 Major Foster was established in Jhūnjūnū in command of the Shekhawātī Brigade, of which one troop was composed of Bidāwats, and towards the expenses of which Bikanir contributed Rs. 22,000 annually.

Major Foster's efficient force and his vigorous action prevented the malcontent thākurs of Bikanir from using Shekhawātī any longer as a refuge and a lurking place, while his neighborhood vastly increased the controlling power of the then chief, who was able to raise the sum first levied from the thākurs in lieu of service by Mahārājā Sūrat Singh, after his treaty with the British Government.

When Major Foster's brigade was removed from Shekhawātī, the Darbār had become too strong to need direct assistance from Government; so that when in 1856 an attempt was made by the Chūrū thākur to recover his estate by force, he was easily driven away and eventually captured.

The thākurs of Bikanir have thus been subjected; the once powerful nobles of Chūrū and Bahādrān now hold but three or four villages and reside constantly under the eye of the Darbār. Mahājan has been deprived of a third of his estate, taxes were multiplied, and lands transferred at the pleasure

of the Mahārājā, and all this without more than a very few thākurs holding grants again venturing to resort to the usual expedient of leaving their state and openly plundering in it from another.

So far as I know, there is no state in Rājputānā in which the old feudal tenure has so nearly passed away, and the power of the chief is so absolute as in Bīkānir. But there is a limit to endurance, and to avoid the retrogression which would be so great an evil, the Darbār certainly ought to make and keep to settlements* with the thākurs similar to the one mentioned at page 79, instead of constantly deepening the discontent by unreasonable additions to their burdens. They furnish no troops to the Darbār, but pay "rakm" or a sum in commutation of service.

This "rakm," though spoken of as commutation for service, included also a protection tax, called "rakhwālī," levied at a time when thākurs required support from the inroads of Sikhs and others. "Rekh" is the term for commutation of service, and "rakm" is "rekh" plus "rakhwālī."

The thākurs of Bīkānir are divided into—

- (1).—Those descended from Bīkā, consisting of nine important families and known generally as Bīkās.
- (2).—Those from Bīdā, Bīkā's brother, consisting of six important families known as Bīdāwats.
- (3).—Those from Karmśī, Bīkā's less distinguished brother, one small family called Karmśiots.
- (4).—Those from Kāndhal, Bīkā's uncle and chief supporter, consisting of three great families known as Kāndhalots. See "CHURU and BAHADRAN."
- (5).—Those from Māndhal and Rūpji, two other uncles of Bīkā, less distinguished than Kāndhal. Their successors are known respectively as Mandhlāwats and Rūpāwats, neither very important.
- (6).—The Bhātīs who possessed their estates before Bīkā's time, and submitted to him or his descendants. They consist of Raolots which have nine branches, and Pugalia which have four.
- (7).—Miscellaneous Rājput families of various clans: twenty-three in all.

The above are all "tāzīmī," or entitled to a place in Darbār.

The thākurs of Bīkānir in many cases retain their pristine manliness and vigor, which are probably kept alive by border fights, by the necessity of looking to their own resources for protection rather than to the authority of the Darbār, attenuated as it is by extension over a vast tract, and lastly by what they call their "game of dacoity and cattle-lifting."

Every one who has the means possesses a small fort, which is surrounded by a rampart of sand supported by "phog" twigs, called a "dhulkot," and within it are usually (or were till recently) found more horses than the ostensible means of the owner justify his keeping. When a dacoity at some distant point is contemplated, the thākur gives his horses a daily allowance of ghī for some time previously, in order to fit them for extraordinary exertion, and then, banded with some of his active neighbors, they make a long night journey, often guided by the stars, to the spot they wish to reach. Here till the arrival of the victims they will lie hidden under a mound or thorn hedge. The booty, which usually consists of camels and their burdens, including perhaps the

* This settlement has recently been extended.

wife of a rich Bania, is then hurried off without delay in a direction likely to mislead pursuers, who soon, aided by a skilful tracker, will be following their footprints. Sometimes they are at considerable trouble to obliterate these footprints, which is, however, no easy matter, for the skill of the "khojis" or trackers is marvellous, and they will often recover the scent when thrown out for a time. It is said that in tracking cattle they can often fix the breed to which the animals belong. But the wind and drifting sand aid the freebooter, who usually gets off with his prize, and if the offence is brought home to him, he seldom suffers any penalty beyond having to restore the stolen goods, and he can sometimes venture to refuse to do even that. The lady he has made a prisoner is in no danger of suffering anything worse than the discomfort of frequent and rapid travelling on the back of a camel. She is certain of being treated with the utmost respect consistent with her security. If, too, at the crisis of the exciting game the Rájput dacoit comes into collision with a Rájput lady, that is if she chooses to give refuge in her own apartments to the victims of his violence, he will usually give way and resign the prize; in fact, the typical Rájput is the most gentlemanly brigand under the sun. I do not mean to say that all thákurs are without scruples as regards plundering: some no doubt disapprove of it, and even an average thákur often thinks it improper to plunder within the limits of his own state, unless his Darbár has maltreated him and compelled him to become a "bárotia" (báhar watani), that is to expatriate himself. His object then is to make himself as offensive to his chief as possible until the latter comes to terms with him. But if active in dacoity, a good border thákur is equally active in resisting it. The knowledge that some well-known "Jesji" or "Sagatji has mounted" often drives back to their forts a band of marauders, and a thákur of special vigor can add to his income by the tribute he receives for protecting weak neighbors. The thákur of the desert is of convivial habits, and when a feast is given the guests usually make a night of it, and can attend to no business, however, pressing, till noon the next day. Their inferior servants are nearly always slaves (see "OFFICIAL CLASSES," "SLAVES").

They themselves however poor have a horror of work which appears menial, and if they take service expect to be treated as gentlemen. The Political Assistant at Sújágarh being anxious to have a Ráthor as a personal attendant offered service to a fine young fellow who had followed and brought prisoner a man who had stolen his camel. The pay Rs. 7 a month, he was well satisfied with, and he was ready to do any work not discreditable; but he was anxious to protect himself against the evil which Firingi service was said to entail, so before closing with the offer he propounded certain conditions; he was not to be called either a chaprásí or a chobdár (mace-bearer), both being ungentlemanly offices; he was not to be required to do any low work (*chodo kám*); his master was never to be angry with him and was not to dismiss him peremptorily. Having stated his conditions, he demanded a written agreement to them, but was eventually satisfied with a general promise of good treatment. Shortly after the Assistant went to Bíkánir, leaving his new attendant behind at Sújágarh. He was so offended at not being taken to Court that he went away. Six months after, a famine having meanwhile occurred, he returned, saying he had only been to see his mother. However, there is no doubt that if stationed near their homes, where they would be happy, Ráthors, who are called by Tod one of the two bravest of all the Rájput races, would eagerly accept service under the British Government, and under mild discipline and kindly officers would make admirable cavalry. The great

families and their estates are shown amongst others at page 115 ; a fuller list of Thákurs will be found in the Sújángarh Annual Report for 1870-71.

The Thákurs, each holding five villages and upwards, are as follows :—

Number	Sub-klan and family	Name of seat or estate	NUMBER OF VILLAGES COMPRISING EACH ESTATE			Amount of "rakm" or revenue paid to the Ráj	REMARKS
			Paying revenue	Revenue-free	TOTAL		
						Rs.	
1	Ratan Singot Bika...	Mahájan ...	53	...	53	14,000	Descendant of Ratan Singh, a grandson of Bika.
2	Ditto. ...	Kumána ...	9	...	9	2,400	
3	Sringot Bika ...	Sidmukh ...	18	...	18	5,000	Descended from Ráo Jet Si.
4	Ditto. ...	Jasána ...	25	...	25	5,000	
5	Ditto. ...	Bái ...	11	...	11	4,800	
6	Ditto. ...	Ajítpur ...	16	...	16	5,000	
7	Ditto. ...	Raslána ...	5	...	5	2,101	
8	Kishen Singot Bika...	Sánkhu ...	21	...	21	6,000	Descended from Rájá Rái Singh.
9	Ditto. ...	Níma ...	11	...	11	3,000	
10	Bhmrajot Bika ...	Rájpura ...	19	...	19	3,100	Descended from Ráo Jet Singh.
11	Pirthirajot Bika ...	Dedrewa ...	14	...	14	5,007	Descended from Ráo Kalián Singh.
12	Amarsiot Bika ...	Hardesar ...	8	...	8	1,300	Ditto Ditto.
13	Ráotot ...	Ráwatsar ...	41	...	41	8,000	
14	Ditto ...	Soín ...	5	...	5	1,600	
15	Ditto ...	Jaitpur ...	8	...	8	2,400	Descended from Kándhal Bika's uncle. Chúrí and Bahádrán were the two principal estates of the Kándhalots.
16	Ditto ...	Bisrásar ...	5	...	5	800	
17	Barínrot ...	Záhiríá ...	8	...	8	1,500	
18	Ditto ...	Sáton ...	8	...	8	1,500	
19	Ditto ...	Depálsar ...	8	...	8	2,000	
20	Ditto ...	Losána ...	7	...	7	751	
21	Keshodásot ...	Bidásar ...	12	...	12	4,001	
22	Khagarot ...	Loa ...	6	...	6	1,101	
23	Ditto ...	Khári ...	9	...	9	2,250	
24	Ditto ...	Kanwári ...	6	...	6	1,201	
25	Tejsiot ...	Gopálpura ...	6	...	6	1,800	
26	Ditto ...	Chárvás ...	8	...	8	1,800	Bidáwats descended from Bidá, Bika's brother.
27	Ditto ...	Malísar Kanotá ...	10	...	10	2,050	
28	Manohardásot ...	Sándwa ...	7	...	7	3,200	
29	Madhláwat .	Sobhasar or Sobhadesar ...	7	...	7	1,900	
30	Pirthirájot ...	Harásar ...	12	...	12	3,001	
31	Mandhláwat ...	Saronda ...	6	...	6	1,501	Descended from Mandhal Bika's uncle Bháti Ráj-púts.
32	Karnot ...	Jaimalsar ...	6	...	6	950	
33	Kishnáwat ...	Khárbára ...	6	...	6	1,200	
34	Pugaliá ...	Pugal ...	2	...	2	...	Villages valued at Rs. 21,400.

The official class consists of hereditary servants of the State and foreigners (pardesis). Against the latter there is a strong prejudice throughout the country. Many important families of hereditary servants are descended from the officials who accompanied Bika when he left Jodhpúr to invade Bikánir;

organized the departments of the state in Rájá Rái Singh's time, are a specimen (*vide* page 31). Then there are the descendants of Níru of Bágór and Nápo the Sankhla, who conjointly observed the omens which led to the selection of the site of the city and forts (*vide* page 7). The principal lower classes of state servants are—

The *darbáris* or *deoridárs*, door-keepers of the palace, who consist chiefly of a family of Saiyads many generations in the ráj service (*vide* page 41), a family of Gangáni Ráthors, and one of Biás Bráhmans.

Fauzdárs, who are not judicial and military officers as the name implies, but the Mahárájá's cup-bearers and of the Bháti clan. Some of these are employed in high offices.

Pándits, or Bráhma cooks.

Khawás, slaves of a superior grade and respectable position.

Kotwáls, who are banner-bearers and not town police superintendents.

Ahírs and *Goddwats*, the Mahárájá's shoe-bearers. The Ahírs are descended from Ude Rám, who did the state good services in Rájá Anúp Singh's time (*vide* page 41).

Asaich Rájputs, who are employed among the camels.

Máltis, or gardeners.

The menials are hereditary household slaves, called "chelas." They are,

SLAVES.

I believe, never sold by Rájput families of distinction, though they often form a part of a bride's dowry. When not the children of slaves, they have usually been purchased in times of famine from their starving relations. Their work is light, and they are generally well treated and sometimes placed in positions of high trust; but thákurs, especially the inferior ones, occasionally act with much cruelty towards their slaves as well as their other dependents. "Chelas" who have fled from their masters are to be met with in British territory, where they often assume the caste of their former owners. The term "chela" signifies disciple rather than slave, and was applied to household servants by the large-minded Akbar as the following extract will show. Whether in this use of the word the Rájputs were taught by Akbar or he by them I cannot at present say:—

"His Majesty from religious motives dislikes the name 'bandah' or slave, for he believes that mastership belongs to no one but God. He therefore calls this class of men *chelahs*, which Hindí 'term' signifies a 'faithful disciple.' Various meanings attach to the term 'slave.' First, that which people in general mean by a slave. Some people obtain power over such as do not belong to their sect and sell and buy them. The wise look upon this as abominable (Blochmann's translation of *Ain Akbari*, p. 254)."

The parohits or priests of the Darbár, as of Ráhtor Rájputs generally, are of the Sánor division of Kanaúj Bráhmans. The ancestors of the present priests are said to have accompanied Seojí when he emigrated to the desert from Kanaúj.

Parohits play an important part in the history of the state, as will be seen from the history.

The pundits or teachers of the Shastars are of the six "Niyátia" or branches of a section of the Gor division. The Joshis or astrologers are Pokarna Bráhmans.

There are about ten official Chárans or bards, who make verses, compile books, and are employed on miscellaneous duties, and one of them has charge of the "bibhut-dán" or department of alms-bestowing; but this office is not hereditary.

CHARANS.

Chárans hold a good many villages throughout the state, and are esteemed almost as much as Bráhmans. They claim, I believe, to be of Rájput extraction.

The Diwáns who have administered the state have been usually taken from the old officials, "mutsaddis," and sufficient is said about them under Part I. Occasionally outsiders have held power, but they meet with great opposition and are unpopular with all classes. An omen long ago is said to have indicated that the state would not flourish under strangers (see last few pages of Part I).

The following statements, taken from the Sujángarh Agency Report for 1870-71, show the estates held under grant, ESTATES-JAGIR AND MUAFI, both those bearing revenue (rakm) and those rent free:—

The following touching story was told me by a Cháran widow:—She had taken up her abode in Chárwás of Bikánir, where she incurred a debt to the thákur of the place, who, fearing she would run away, confined her in a hole. Out of this hole she managed to scramble, and taking advantage of a blinding sandstorm escaped from the village with her children in her arms to Chápar, a few miles off, out of the thákur's reach. There she was followed by a man with whom she had cohabited and whom the thákur had sent to entice her back. She would not go, but the man remained with her, and after a time took an opportunity of selling her children as slaves and carried the price to the thákur. One of the children was unweaned, and the purchaser permitted her to remain and nurse it; but he had not the humanity to provide her with food, and she was soon obliged to return to Chárwás, as she had a chance of earning a little money there, and she hoped before long to come back and nurse her child. But no sooner was she within reach of the thákur than he again shut her up, and she could not get away in time to save her baby, which died for want of nutriment. Pressed by want she once more returned to Chárwás, and again lived with the thákur's man, by whom she had a child. The man at length died, whereupon, for money he owed the thákur, the latter seized the child and once more confined the widow, who escaping came with her complaint to Sujángarh.

Estates held by Deed of Grant (Pattas) and paying "Rakm" to the Raj.

No.	Names of sub-clans.	No. of villages.	Amount of "rakm."	Total of "rakm."	Head-quarters of principal thákurs
<i>I.—Bikas.</i>					
1	Rájwí ...	22	3,036	...	Village Changoi.
2	Khawáswal (or illegitimate) ...	3	226	...	
3	Ratansingot ...	82	25,164	...	
4	Sringot ...	120	33,503	...	
5	Gharsiot ...	11	2,776	...	,, Mahajan. ,, Bhukarko. Jagasana, Sídmutkh ,, Ajitpúra. ,, Gharsisar, Garbdesar. ,, Dadrewa. ,, Meghána.
6	Pirthi Rájot ...	16	5,407	...	
7	Bághawat ...	7	1,519	...	
8	Amarrot ...	1	110	...	
9	Tejsiot ...	8	2,771	...	
10	Ramawat ...	1	250	...	,, Hardesar.
11	Nimawat ...	2	550	...	
12	Mádhosot ...	2	641	...	
13	Rájsiot ...	2	85	...	
14	Partáb Singot ...	1	6	...	,, Rájpura.
15	Kishan Singot ...	56	16,706	...	
16	Umráwat ...	12	2,846	...	
17	Nárnót ...	29	8,105	...	
18	Bhímrajot ...	19	3,100	106,801	
TOTAL		394			
<i>II.—Kandhlot.</i>					
1	Ráolot ...	80	17,865	...	,, Rawatsar, Jaitpur, Dhandusar. ,, Depalsar, Zahiria, Sátón. Formerly the Banirots and Sándasots held the great estates of Bahdrán and Chúrú respectively, see pages 110, 111.
2	Barinrot ...	57	14,275	...	
3	Sándásot ...	6	931	33,071	
TOTAL		143			
<i>III.—Bidáwats.</i>					
1	Keshodásot ...	15	4,791	...	,, Bidásar. ,, Sandwa. ,, Gopálpúra, Malsisar, Charwas. ,, Loha, Khari, Kanwári.
2	Manohardásot ...	44	12,916	...	
3	Tejsot ...	44	10,647	...	
4	Khagárot ...	33	7,974	...	
5	Mán Singot ...	12	3,406	...	,, Sobhasar. ,, Harsasar.
6	Mundráwats ...	9	2,300	...	
7	Udekarnot ...	3	440	...	
8	Pirthirajot ...	20	4,947	...	
9	Sánwaldásot ...	1	275	...	,, Saronda. [Several of these families are as old as any in the state. Thus the Karmsiots, Mandlawats, and Rúpawats are descended from uncles and coadjutors of Biká, but none are of much present importance.]
10	Sihawats ...	3	400	...	
11	Haráwats ...	7	648	...	
12	Bhimgot ...	1	110	48,554	
TOTAL		192			
<i>IV.—Other classes of Rathors.</i>					
1	Karmsiot ...	6	2,498	...	,, Saronda. [Several of these families are as old as any in the state. Thus the Karmsiots, Mandlawats, and Rúpawats are descended from uncles and coadjutors of Biká, but none are of much present importance.]
2	Randhirot ...	1	6	...	
3	Mandlawats ...	10	2,503	...	
4	Mándlot ...	3	432	...	
5	Ranmalot ...	1	51	...	
6	Rúpawats ...	6	1,044	...	
7	Jaimalot ...	1	60	...	
8	Kundaliá ...	2	82	...	
9	Udáwats ...	4	942	...	
10	Náthal ...	2	147	...	
11	Patáwat ...	1	20	...	
12	Gohel ...	1	5	7,790	
TOTAL		38			

Estates held by Deed of Grant (Pattas) and paying "Rakm" to the Raj—(contd.)

No.	Names of sub-clans.	No. of villages.	Amount of "rakm."	Total of "rakm."	Head-quarters of principal thákurs
	Brought forward ...	767		196,516	
	V.— <i>Bhattis.</i>				
1	Púgalia ...	12	2,102	...	Village Púgal.
2	Raolot ...	4	367	...	" Bítnok.
3	Dhanrajot ...	18	3,445	...	" Jaimalsar.
4	Karnot ...	14	1,374	...	" Khárbara.
5	Kishnáwat ...	10	2,200	...	
6	Gogli ...	4	475	...	
7	Bálá ...	3	94	...	
8	Derawariá ...	1	400	...	
9	Páhu ...	3	210	...	
10	Kehar ...	1	35	...	
11	Chheua ...	1	55	10,757	
12	Anjunot ...	2	96	...	
13	Akháwat ...	1	15	...	
14	Khíán ...	1	160	...	
15	Jaitung ...	2	229	...	
16	Rar ...	1	5	...	
17	Rupsiot (Fojdár) ...	8	1,859	...	
18	Búdh ...	3	56	2,420	
	TOTAL ...	89			
	VI.— <i>Kachwaha.</i>				
1	Girdharjika ...	4	590	...	
2	Bhainrujika ...	2	433	...	
3	Kachwáhá ...	3	476	...	
4	Narúka ...	1	97	1,596	
	TOTAL ...	10			
	VII.—Panwar ...	18	2,774	...	
	VIII.—Sodah ...	2	112	...	
	IX.—Tádwar ...	2	654	...	
	X.—Sisodi ...	4	696	...	
	XI.—Gahlot ...	1	103	...	
	XII.—Asáyach ...	1	100	4,439	
	XIII.—Chandráwat ...	1	85	85	
	TOTAL ...	29			5,524.
	<i>State servants,—chákars, hazuris and darbáris.</i>				
1	Saní ...	4	662	...	} Both are Parihars : the first are the hereditary horsemen and stable superintendents, the second are the Maharaja's valets and body-guards.
2	Parihár ...	13	3,693	...	
3	Ida ...	1	36	...	
4	Chohán ...	1	290	...	
5	Baghor Chohán ...	4	171	...	
6	Deora and Baghor ...	2	55	...	
7	Sánkhla ...	10	758	...	
8	Sonugra ...	3	151	5,816	
9	Khinchí ...	2	276	...	
10	Kulya ...	1	63	...	
11	Dhain ...	1	24	363	
12	Kothíari ...	2	155	...	
13	Kháwas ...	10	4,167	...	
14	Ahír ...	1	132	...	
	TOTAL ...	183	...	299,30	10,633.
	Carried over ...	950	...	226,446	

Estates held by Deed of Grant (Pattas) and paying "Rakm" or Commutation for service to the Raj—(contd.)

No.	Names of sub-clans.	No. of villages.	Amount of "rakm."	Total of "rakm."	Head-quarters of principal thākurs.
	Brought forward ...	950	...	2,26,446	
	<i>State servants,— Chākaras, hazūris and darbāris—(contd.)</i>				
15	Kayath (Tan Bakshi) ...	1	28	...	
16	Darbāris ...	...	...	...
17	Five Hindū, Rs. 188 ...	10	743	...	
	„ Musalmans, Rs. 555 ...	...		...
18	Sutar (carpenter) ...	1	33	...	
19	Rāikā (camel-man) ...	1	6	...	
20	Mālis (gardener) ...	1	105	...	
21	Kotwāl ...	2	123	...	
22	Dhobi ...	1	215	5,707	
	TOTAL ...	72			
	<i>Charitable grants.</i>				
1	Brāhmans ...	44	4,877	...	
2	Chārans ...	36	1,184	...	
3	Suamis ...	2	37	...	
4	Fakirs, Musalman ...	1	21	...	
5	Other charitable grants.	7	13	6,132	
	TOTAL ...	701	...	7,385	
	GRAND TOTAL ...	1,057	2,33,831	2,33,831	

ABSTRACT.

1	Bikas ...	394	1,06,801	...
2	Kāndhals ...	143	33,071	...
3	Bidāwats ...	192	48,854	...
4	Other Rāthors ...	38	7,790	...
5	Bhattis ...	89	13,177	...
6	Kachhwāhā ...	10	1,596	...
7	Panwar, &c. ...	30	10,703	...
8	State servants ...	71	5,707	...
9	Brāhmans, &c. ...	90	6,132	...
	TOTAL ...	1,057	2,33,831	2,33,831

Abstract of "Betalb" or Revenue-free Pattas.

No.	Names	No. of villages	Amount	Total	Remarks
			Rs.	Rs.	
1	Ránís	49	75,784	...	Mistresses of the first rank.
2	Khawases	4	6,500	...	
3	Other female relations...	8	8,600	...	
4	Bháí beta (nearest of kin)	20	16,000	...	
5	Rajwí	1	250	...	
6	Thákur Jai Singh of Dundlod (cousin) ...	1	29,000	...	
7	Khawáswals, or natural children and relations of Khawáses and Khawáswals...	10	9,000	1,45,134	Families of illegitimate sons of chiefs.
	<i>Thákurs of Jodhpúr.</i>				
1	Mertia	4	7,300	...	
2	Champawat	1	900	...	
3	Karmisot	1	1,000	...	
4	Jodha	1	600	9,800	
		7			
	<i>Thákurs of Bikanér.</i>				
1	Sáindasot	10	5,900	...	
2	Ratoot	3	1,000	...	
3	Banirot	11	10,250	...	
4	Narnot	3	5,000	...	
5	Kishengot	2	221	...	
6	Sringot	7	3,170	25,541	
	<i>Parsang, of relations of chief by marriage.</i>				Foster fathers and brothers of chiefs and their families.
1	Shekhawat	23	12,200	...	
2	Bhatís	13	29,675	...	
3	Chohan	1	1,000	...	
4	Panwar	9	8,500	...	
5	Chandráwat	1	100	...	
6	Hada	3	825	...	
7	Tanwar	5	2,300	...	
8	Ladkhni	1	250	...	
9	Sankhla	2	700	55,550	
1	Grants held by religious persons...	...	59,110	59,110	
2	Dhabúi and dhaús and others ... ..	...	8,950	...
3	Pensions ... ..	...	7,801	...
4	Service land ... ..	...	3,973	...
5	Matasaddís (or officials).	...	11,500	...	
6	Hazúrís and darbarís ...	...	5,270	37,494
	TOTAL ... ..	...	...	3,32,629



PART IV.

DISTRICTS, TOWNS AND VILLAGES.

The northern parganas of the Bikanir State lie along the bank of the Sotra or Hakrá, in the dry bed of which wells are dug and the best water in the region obtained. The head-quarters of the Parganas Anúpgarh, Sardárgarh or Alwána, Súratgarh and Hanúmágarh, or Bhatner and Tibí, are all on the bank of the ancient river. The inhabitants of the region are Bhátis Pírzádás (see "PASTORAL PEOPLE"), Sodas Ráhts, Johiyas, and Bhattís (see below under "BHATNER"). The country is bare and desolate to a degree: towards the east sandy and undulating, elsewhere often firm and level. In spite of the difficulty about water, the grazing is excellent and the number of cattle possessed by the people great; it averages perhaps twenty head to a house; and from Bháwalpúr and the British districts cattle are brought to graze, the Bikanir people being in return allowed, when occasion requires, to take their cattle to the banks of the Satlaj. The Sotra occasionally flows. General Cunningham speaks of the water sometimes coming roaring down, but its waters are soon absorbed in the desert.

The Naiwál is another old river-bed lying nearly parallel to, and a few miles north of, the Sotra, but water never I believe flows in it. Other old channels there are, and so great was the united body of water which must at some period have flowed down them that they are conjectured to have borne the ancient Satlaj.

Anúpgarh district on the northern border contains 37 villages, which are said to possess but 429 ploughs, or less than 13 to a village. Of these 300 are dragged by camels, 5 by buffaloes, 7 by donkeys, and the rest by bullocks.

Of the houses, numbering 5,94,372 are said to be of mud and 222 of grass and "phog." There are 39 shops, and the population is estimated at 3,646, cattle 6,789, sheep and goats 5,539.

The grazing in this pargana is in parts very good; but water, which is collected in tanks (tobas and jors), is often scarce. "Sajji" or potash is the only special product. The ancient bed of the Kagar passes through a part of the pargana, and wells in it supply the best water obtained. There are scarcely any masonry buildings in the pargana, and no villages with a population of five hundred persons. Rájputs and Musalmáns (the latter are called Sindhás) are the most numerous.

The head-quarters of the district of that name, ninety miles due north of the city on the bank of the Sotra, only remarkable for its fort, which is considered of some importance; but I am unable to give any description of it. For an account of the capture of Anúpgarh from the Bhattís and Johiyas, *vide* Part I, page 40.

Sardárgarh district.

Adjoins Anúpgarh on the east—

25 villages,
323 ploughs,
403 houses.

Many Ráths live in the pargana. They are a class of Musalmán Rájpúts of somewhat predatory habits (see next page).

Head-quarters of the pargana also on the Sotra. The village was established in "A.D." 1832 by two Bika Rájpúts, and called Alwána. It subsequently became fiscal

SARDARGARH. (khálisha), and Maharájá Ratan Singh named it after his son Sardár Singh.

Suratgarh district, east of Sirdárgarh and west of Bhatner or Hanúmágarh, formerly, according to the Darbár's report, called Sodáwáti, being part of the territory occupied by the Sodá Rájpúts, who were supplanted by the Bhattís.

A little wheat and barley is produced in this pargana when the rains are abundant, and the grazing is very good. The houses are numbered at 1,973, and the population estimated at 10,000.

Head-quarters of the pargana of the same name on the Sotra. It was founded by one Raghúnáth Singh, who had a fort there. In Sambat 1862 (A.D. 1815) Maharájá

SURATGARH. Súrát Singh took possession of it, and built a fort there which he named after himself.

The village contains about five hundred houses, chiefly Játs, Brahmans, and Khatris. It is one hundred and fifteen miles north-east-by-north of the city.

HANUMANGARH DISTRICT OR Bhatner. The Hanúmágarh or Bhatner district comprises—

110 villages,
1,715 houses,
1,593 ploughs.
10,648 inhabitants (according to darbár report),
19,590 cattle (including sheep and goats).

The old bed of the Kagar, which crosses the district and on which the fort and head-quarters station is situated, sometimes contains water in the rains, after which some wheat and barely is produced.

Labánás, Játs, Ráths and Johyas are the principal inhabitants.

Sajjá is an important article of manufacture in about twenty villages to the north of the district.

The Bhatner fort has attained great historical celebrity from its position, being in the route of invasion from Central Asia to India.

I am informed by Mr Oliver, late Deputy Commissioner of Sirsa, that Bhatner, Abor, Bhatindá, and Sirsa, situated at the angles of a nearly square figure with a side about fifty miles long; each had a fort on the same plan and of the same dimensions, and thus was formed a "quadrilateral" in the path of any invader from the north-west.

The "*Tórikh Hind*" speaks of Bhatner having been taken by Mahmúd of Ghazni in 1001; and Tod speaks of its having been attacked by Timúr. It seems probable that he left a Tartar Chagitai noble in charge of it, who was expelled by Bhattís from Márot and Phulra under one Bersi; but whether the place took its name originally from them or from one Rájá Bharat is a moot point (*Hissar Gazetteer*). General Cunningham, who, with the late Colonel Jackson, was employed as Commissioner in A.D. 1847 to determine the north-east boundary of Bháwalpur and Bikanír, states that Bhatner was taken by Khetsi Kondhalát in Sambat 1854 (A.D. 1527) from Sada Cháyál Rájpút, of which clan no mention is made by Tod. In Sambat 1606 (A.D. 1549)—these dates do not exactly tally with those of the Kiyánt—Mirzá Kámrán, brother of Húmáýún, assaulted and took the fort, on which occasion Khetsi with five thousand Rájpúts was slain, though Kámrán was subsequently

defeated by Ráo Jetsá of Bikanír. Fíroz Cháyal had meanwhile recovered the fort, and the Ráo therefore sent his son, Thákur Sí, to retake it. The rest of the Commissioner's abstract of the history of Bhatner, which was derived from two different Persian manuscripts, one of which was obtained from a Saiyad, the descendant of the ancient Kázás of Bhatner, tallies generally with the "Kiyánt," with which the above too does not materially differ. The Commissioners examined the earliest deed produced referring to Bhatner, namely, the imperial firmán under which Rái Singh of Bikanír held the pargana from Akbar. The annual value of Bhatner was noted at about nine lakhs of dáms.

The southern point of the Láhor Súbah which adjoined Bhatner was, as appeared from an examination of the "Ain Akbarí," on the *danda* or old bank of the Satlaj; and the accounts of Rájá Anúp Singh's time which the Commissioners saw also show that the western boundary of the pargana was then the said *danda*.

When Rájá Anúp Singh visited the pargana in Sambat 1742, a bard, one Karam Sándú, recited a poem before him, which specified the extent of the pargana and gave the names of the villages inhabited at that time as 241 in number. The bard received in rent-free grant the village of Ludána on the old bed of the Sotra, and his descendant produced the poem before the Commissioners. General Cunningham has allowed me to examine the poem, which describes the pargana as reaching six "jojans" (42 miles) north of Bhatner fort twelve "jojans" (84 miles) west, 22 kos (44 miles) east, and 12 kos (24 miles) south. The sites of a very large number of the villages are still known.

The Johiyas are Rájpúts (and not Jats as supposed by Tod) of a very ancient and powerful stock indeed, once known as Yaudheyas, who probably contended with Alexander, before whose time they were, it is believed, established on the banks of the Satlaj. Yaudheya coins as old as the first century of the Christian era have been found near that river (Cunningham's *Ancient Geography*, Vol. I, p. 245). The Johiyas are by no means now extinct, as Tod imagined; many of them are Musalmáns, but some in the Sirsá district, Mr. Oliver tells me, are still Hindús. According to General Cunningham* they formerly held much of the country west and south-west of Bhatner, and their chief places were Khárbára, Sahánkot, and Badopol, which the Ráthors took from them. There are three sections of the tribe—the Admera and Lakvira, who are settled on the banks of the Satlaj, and the Madhera, who, together with the representative of the House of Madhu, the founder of the clan, are for the most part subjects of the Bikanír state. The boundary of these two divisions is still the bank of the old Satlaj.

The Bhattís of Bhatner are believed to be Bhattís converted to Islamism, and to be decended from Jaisal, who founded Jaisalmír and who is said to have been the ancestor, by a left-handed marriage, of the Sikhs of Patlálá, Jínd, and Nábhá.

The Ráhts also are said to be converted Rájpúts; they are of four clans, two of which claim to be Choháns, one Tuar, and one Saroa. In Hissár they are known as Pachádas, and their name "Ráth" signifies cruel. They were great marauders and are now pastoral (*Hissár Gazetteer*).

Tibí, east of Hanúmángarh, is the pargana granted by the British Government to Bikanír in 1861 for services performed during the mutinies. It consists of 42 villages, containing 1,936 houses, and, according to the Dartár, 9,562 inhabitants. It

* Rough draft of a report on the Bikanír and Baháwalpúr boundaries.

too is on the Sotra, and when the rains are good and the river flows and floods freely, good crops of wheat are subsequently raised. When the villagers were transferred to Bikánir, the Darbár disregarded the land revenue settlement made with the villagers, who were the descendants of old soldiers, to whom these lands were granted after the Pindári War, and called "sukhlambars" (see *Hissár Gazetteer*). On the villagers complaining the British Government represented their grievance, and eventually in 1869 the Political Officer of Sijángarh induced the Darbár to continue the original settlement for as many years beyond its term as it had been in abeyance.

The details furnished are as follow:—

Men	...	...	...	...	3,261
Women	...	...	...	...	1,613
Boys	...	...	...	...	1,890
Girls	...	...	...	...	1,600

There are said to be but 1,107 ploughs—

Cattle	...	...	...	...	6,859
Sheep and goats	...	...	...	...	5,651

This estate, containing in 1870 sixty-nine villages belonging to the first thákur of Bikánir, at present is sequestered, the thákur having refused to accept the terms on which the Darbár will allow him possession, namely, a ten years' lease at Rs. 200, as commutation for each horse of the eighty-six he used to furnish. Mahájan is seventy miles north-east of Bikánir. The thákur and the Darbár have long been on bad terms (*vide* page 72).

NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICTS. Púgal is a hief of villages in the western corner of the state belonging to an old Bhatti family (see page 6).
Púgal.

The town of Púgal is one of the oldest of these regions. Its fort was the north-eastern of the nine strongholds of Máru (*nau koti Maru ki*) when the Ponwars ruled the desert. The Bhattis are said to have held it for more than a thousand years (p. 36 and Tod, Vol. II, p. 265, 2nd edition). In A. D. 1830 the Mahárájáh took the fort, and the Púgal thákur, often rebellious formerly, is now in subjection. Púgal is famous for its cows.

Nohar district on the north-east border, adjoining the British districts of Sirsá and Hissár, contains 124 villages, in which are 3,541 houses and 1,421 ploughs. It is on the north-east.

Nohar. Head-quarters of the pargana, is 130 miles north-east of the city.

The Bahádran district, adjoining and east of Nohar, also on the border, contains by the latest accounts—

Villages	...	...	...	...	89
Houses	...	...	...	...	3,738
Ploughs	...	...	...	...	2,811
Men	...	...	...	...	11,197
Women	...	...	...	...	8,407

TOTAL POPULATION ... 19,604

The Oswal Baniyas are those best off.

The district was formerly the estate of the Saindāsot branch of the family of Kāndhal, Bikā's uncle. After prolonged contests with the Darbār, the thākur was finally dispossessed in A.D. 1818.

The Sikhs, who the thākur had called in, were then occupying the district, and after their expulsion it remained for four years in the hands of the British Government as security for payment of the cost of the army employed in reducing the rebels of Bikānir.

The Rājgarh district, which financially is the most productive in the state, is called also the Pūnian pargana after the clan of Jāts who chiefly cultivate it. It is situated on the easternmost corner of the state.

EASTERN DISTRICTS.

Rājgarh district.

It is said to contain—

Villages	...	...	...	...	157
Houses	...	...	...	...	5,391
Ploughs	...	...	...	...	3,562
Souls	...	...	...	...	25,421

There is a hill or two in the district, but the stone is valueless. When the rains are heavy, a small stream flows into the pargana from Shekhāwātī, and is utilized for irrigation.

The headquarters of the pargana, and 160 miles east-by-north of the city of Bikānir. It has something under 900 houses and a population of 3,800. The town was founded by

Rājā Gaj Singh in Sambat 1822 and named after his son Rāj Singh. A fort was built under the Rājā's orders by his minister Mahta Bakhtāwar Singh.

Sānkho.

In Rājgarh is the seat of a thākur possessing 21 villages. It contains 400 houses.

Ajtpūra.

In Rājgarh is the residence of a thākur possessing 16 villages.

The Reni district lies west of Rājgarh. It has, it is said, 127 villages, containing 3,900 houses, a population of 22,236, and 3,537 ploughs.

Reni district.

Head-quarters of the district of Reni, and distant 135 miles east-by-north of Bikānir. It contains 2,000 houses. The town is said to have been founded by one Rājā Reni Pāl

Reni.

some thousands of years ago. In the time of Jaswant Singh, the last of Reni Pāl's race, the country was ruined by seven consecutive famines, and the Chāyāl Rājput's took possession of it: then the Rāthors under Bikā expelled, and the district was added to the territory of that leader. Mahārājā Gaj Singh was born at Reni, which is now looked upon as an auspicious spot for births. Mahārājā Sūrat Singh built the present fort at Reni. There are some "chhatris" (cenotaphs) and a handsome Jain temple built in Sambat 999 (A.D. 942) so solidly that the masonry is as strong now as when new. Its Sri Puji or priest gets a small allowance from the Darbār. The town contains 1,100 houses and a population of 5,500 persons. An annual fair takes place at a temple of Rāmdēo's built by one Rakhī Singh in Sambat 1875 (A.D. 1818).

There are ten considerable villages in Reni—

Jasrāsar.	Changot, once the seat of a rival Rājā of
Dhodhara.	Bikānir (see History, p. 37).
Gāngir.	Bhojāwas.
Zahiria.	Ganthāl.
Lohsua.	Harpalsar.
Rājpurā.	

At Jasrásar on the 5th of each month a small fair takes place at a shrine.

The Chúrú district has thirteen villages, containing it is said,—

Houses	...	...	...	2,442
Men	...	...	...	7,424
Women	...	...	...	6,377
Kine	...	...	...	4,004
Buffaloes	...	...	...	301
Horses	...	...	...	26
Camels	...	...	...	821
Sheep and goats	...	...	...	2,562
Wells	...	...	...	26
Tanks	...	...	...	2

The principal villages of the pargana are—

- (1) Ratangarh, (2) Rabia, (3) Bútia,
(4) Ránásar, (5) Ghásol.

The headquarters of the district of the same name is said to have been founded by Chohar Ját two hundred and fifty years ago.

Chohar possessed the other twelve villages of the district as well, and paid revenue to the Imperial Subadár of Hissár. He is said to have been killed at village Sánúm in Reni, and to have been succeeded by his brother, Diláwar, who fell fighting with Kándhal's descendant, Málde. Málde's successor, Khushál Singh, is said to have built the fort in Sambat 1796 (A.D. 1739), and to have added to the prosperity of the town by giving refuge to the Banyias of Fatahpúr when they fled from the extortions of Náhar Singh Shekháwat, the conqueror of the Káim Khánis rulers of Fatahpur in the present Sikar territory.

The Chúrú thákurs were constantly contending with the Darbár, and in Sambat 1870 (A.D. 1813) the then thákur being besieged by a ráj force and reduced to great straits swallowed a diamond and died from the effects (*vide* History, p. 69), and Chúrú fell into the hands of the Darbár.

The successor of the thákur just mentioned recovered his estate by the aid of the Pindári leader, Amir Khán. But the Darbár, assisted by a British force, finally took possession in A.D. 1818. In A.D. 1854 the thákur again surprised and seized the fort, killing the ráj official in charge; but he was immediately ousted, and surrendered to a British officer. Since then his family, the Banirot section of the Kándhlots, have been out of possession, and the fort is occupied by a hundred and fifty horse and foot and two guns belonging to the Darbár. Several trade lines converge at Chúrú, namely, those between the British districts to the east and Jodhpúr and Bikanir, so that it is for Bikanir a mart of importance.

A traveller approaching from the Shekháwáti side does not, owing to intervening sand hills, see the town till close to it, when the bright white chhatris, the large houses, and other signs of wealth and comfort, together with the trees which grow in the town, have a most grateful aspect after the dreary waste previously passed through. It contains more than two thousand houses, several fine chhatris, and magnificent wells, and has some wealthy residents.

The Sújángarh pargana is the only one regarding which it has been possible to obtain full and pretty reliable information in consequence of a political officer having been resident there. It comprises two hundred and ten towns and villages, of which

all, with the exception of the town of Sújāgarh and the villages of Chápar and Dariba, which have been acquired by the Darbár, belong to the Bídawat thákurs. Those villages in which the principal thákurs reside, namely, Malsísar, Bídásar, Gopálpura, Chárwás, Kanwári Kurá, Sobhagdesar, Harásar, Loha, Kánota, and Sándwa all have a masonry fort and a shop or two and a "chhatrí," or perhaps two or three. Sándwa has something of a bazaar; the others, with the exception of those to be mentioned below, are mere collections of huts, with here and there a "dhúlkot" or fort of sand supported by *phog* stems. This tract is often termed "Bídawáti," which includes, however, Ratangarh not properly in the pargana. The district is ten kos from north to south and twenty-four kos from east to west. It adjoins the parganas of Chúrú and the "chíras" of Rájíhad and Jasrásar and Gosáínsar, and stretches for twenty-five kos along the Márwár and Jaipúr borders.

It is remarkable as containing a strip of country ten kos long by four kos broad, and extending northwards from the town of Sújāgarh, wherein water is near, often very near, the surface; and nowhere in the pargana is it necessary in search of water to delve down to the depths at which it is found in other parts of the state, for it is always to be obtained within a hundred and fifty feet from the level of the ground. Another noticeable feature is the eight or nine rocky hills scattered over the district, which relieve the eye wearied with the expanse of sand or sand hillocks. In one of these hills, near the village of Dariba, copper ore is found, but the mine is not rich enough to repay working it. Two hills of the group near Gopálpura have shrines upon them: they are of granite, and attain a height of seven or eight hundred feet above the plain. Under one of them once nestled the very ancient town of Dronpúr, celebrated in the early history of the district and said to have been founded by Drona, the tutor of the Pándús.

Besides the towns and forts about to be mentioned, it is only necessary to speak of the lake of Chápar. Like all "sars" or lakes in the sandy tracts, it is formed by a depression which receives the drainage of the surrounding country, and is about three kos long by a kos broad. In its neighborhood salt deposits are found in a smaller hollow, and about twenty-five tons of salt is produced in an average year; but it is of an inferior quality, bitter and only fit for tanning or other antiseptic purposes. In years when the rains are favorable, and the lake extends beyond the usual bed, wheat is sown as the water dries off, and pretty good crops are sometimes raised. A smaller quantity is produced at a few villages where irrigation is possible. The excellent grazing round the lake has been already mentioned.

Though trees are scarce throughout the district, there are signs that, if protected, they could be advantageously raised. At the village of Lotsar *shisham* grows spontaneously, and at Sújāgarh there is at least one fairly fine tree of that kind.

Lime-stone is plentiful in many localities, but it is often soft and does not make good lime. Sandstone is found in one or two localities, and granite at Gopálpura: but the former will not form slabs, and the latter is too full of flaws to be cut.

Bharút is the commonest grass of the pargana. Cattle are not so numerous as in the country to the north and west, nor are sheep as plentiful as in the country round Bikanir. Játs and Gújars are the chief graziers. The cattle of the town of Sújāgarh, which I mention as a specimen, are estimated at 200 buffaloes and 800 cows and bullocks, 350 camels, and 300 sheep.

Sújángarh was founded by Maharájá Súrat Singh, who in or about the year 1835 took for the purpose some small villages on the Márwár border from the Sándwa thákur, indemnifying the latter by a grant elsewhere. Inducements to settle in the new town were held out to merchants, who received land on favorable terms, and some were excused the payment of "bach" or house-tax, graduated according to means; indeed, the wealthiest Seth in the town pays none at the present day.

The cultivators, too, hold their lands on terms more advantageous, or at least nominally so, than those in the surrounding thákur villages, where it is not unusual to find a Ját paying his landlord Rs. 20 for a hundred bighás in addition to a fourth of his crop.

The "chhatís paun" or thirty-six castes which collectively form Hindú society are said to be all represented in Sújángarh. The total number of houses is about a thousand, and as reliable general statistics of population are not procurable, at least in detail, I take the opportunity of giving a specimen of the different castes resident in a Bikanér town. The figures were obtained from an intelligent and well informed villager, and are distributed as follows:--

Bráhmans	...	...	...	...	100
Uswál	} Eanias {	...	...	...	15
Mahesri		...	...	...	85
Saráogi		...	...	...	45
Aggarwálá		...	...	...	100
Ját	...	...	...	...	65
Rájpút	...	...	...	...	45
Káim Khání (Musalmán Rájpúts)	...	...	...	...	60
Vishnu or Sanjogi	...	...	...	...	10
Lohár (blacksmith)	...	...	...	...	1
Gújar	...	...	...	...	20
Khátí or sutar (carpenter)	...	...	...	...	15
Pinará (cotton cleaner)	...	...	...	...	16
Nílgar (indigo dyer)	...	...	...	...	10
Chhipá (cloth printer)	...	...	...	...	10
Darzi (tailor)	...	...	...	...	6
Súnár (goldsmith)	...	...	...	...	20
Manihár (lac-worker)	...	...	...	...	3
Dhobí (washermen)	...	...	...	...	3
Nái (barbers and cooks)	...	...	...	...	20
Bálái or chamár (these are chiefly weavers of coarse cloth)	...	...	...	...	55
Khatik (tanners of sheep and goat skins)	...	...	...	...	4
Regar (tanners of hides)	...	...	...	...	50
Teli (oil men)	...	...	...	...	20
Dákot (professional beggars)	...	...	...	...	15
Náik	...	...	...	...	2
Báori (a low thieving caste; also chaukidárs)	...	...	...	...	5
Mali (gardeners)	...	...	...	...	7
Kumhár (potters)	...	...	...	...	50
Muhammádan fakír	...	...	...	...	120
Kalál (spirit-sellers)	...	...	...	...	3
Khatri (a respectable trading caste)	...	...	...	...	10
Bhangí (sweepers)	...	...	...	...	0
Mochí (shoemakers)	...	...	...	...	15
Siklígár (tinker)	...	...	...	...	4
Ahír (a well-known great caste)	...	...	...	...	2
Rebári (camel men)	...	...	...	...	1
TOTAL				...	1,082

Most of the castes are engaged in agriculture; but this is a less inviting occupation than the nearness of water to the surface would lead one to expect. It is found within a very few feet, but there is not above three feet of sweet water. An inch too far and the stratum of pernicious water is tapped and the well spoilt for all practical purposes. The three feet diminishes in the hot-weather, and no well can be rapidly worked, because usable water does not flow into it quick enough. Moreover the sweet water is only comparatively so, and its goodness would seem to be capricious, for the character of a well is found to vary. For years it will produce drinkable water, then, as though touched by a malicious magician's wand, it will become brackish and useless, and again recover its former character after a time. Large wells, worked by bullocks, are therefore not to be seen, and water is raised from little excavations by means of "dhenkies" or weighted poles working on an axle. By this means small patches of ground can be irrigated and little crops of barley or vegetables raised, indeed; wells which one year nourished and brought to maturity crops of barley, sometimes appear the next year to burn up the young plants.

The well-to-do traders are about a hundred in number, and there are a few of considerable wealth. The situation of Sújāngarh on the trade route from Bhiwání to Páli, Jodhpúr, Ajmír, &c., and between Bíkánír and Jaipúr, gives it advantages as a depôt. There is a small export of cloth and leather, which are manufactured in the town. The bazaar contains three hundred shops of various kinds, and there are almost four hundred masonry houses in the town, which is supplied with red sandstone from quarries about two kos off, across the Márwár border, near Ládnú. Soft lime-stone is abundant near the town.

A British post office is established at Sújāngarh.

The "chhatris" are the only buildings at all ornamental: of these there are six—the cenotaphs of mahájans. The gardens are miserable affairs, consisting of an enclosure with a few ill-grown *bair* trees and a *shisham* or two. The latter, however, here and there, have attained respectable dimensions. The town contains two mosques, four dharmśálás, and twenty-seven temples as follows:—

Vishnu	...	...	...	...	8
Deví	...	...	...	...	2
Mahadeo and Gangaji	...	...	...	...	1
Hánúman	...	...	...	...	6
Rámdeoñi	...	...	...	...	2
Saníchaji	...	...	...	...	2
Bhaironji	...	...	...	...	2
Jain temples	...	...	...	...	4
TOTAL					27

A substantial bungalow, built in 1868 for the political officer located at Sújāngarh in that year, stands on a sand mound west of the town.

Sújāngarh fort belongs to the Darbár, and is occupied by the Hákím or principal officer of the pargana and his office. It is not on an eminence and has no scarped moat, though it has something of a "dhúlkot" round it. It contains two guns (4-pounders). It is about two hundred feet square and its walls are five or six feet thick, the facing at least being of good masonry. It is said to have been originally built by the Thákur of Sándwa at the cost of the price of a horse, which, judiciously exchanged in prosperous times for three thousand maunds of bájrá, enabled him during a subsequent famine to employ the hungry and build the fort. It was altered and improved by Mahárájá Śrút Singh.

There are two Darbár forts here, both built by Mahārājā Sūrat Singh. Neither have moats nor are of much strength. The smallest and least substantial is on elevated ground; the other is somewhat larger than the Sūjāngarh fort, which in height and thickness of walls it resembles. There are guns in the forts, which are at present held by Jet Singh of Dundlod, grantee of Ratāngarh.

Ratāngarh, which I notice here as being in Bīdāwātī though not in Sūjāngarh. The town was founded on the site of a village named Kolāsar by Mahārājā Sūrat Singh at the end of the last century. It was improved by Mahārājā Ratān Singh, who gave it his name. The number of houses is 1,200, and the character of the population may be assumed to correspond with that of Sūjāngarh, than which, however, it is somewhat wealthier.

There are two or three very rich men in the town, and about twenty more than well-to-do, besides many prosperous traders. The Aggarwālās are the most numerous class. The Oswālās, which come next, have about a hundred houses. At present the town is not so thriving as it was, in consequence of the bankruptcies which have of late years occurred in the great commercial cities of India, and which affected the most remote towns. The bazaar is straight and broad. In and near the town there are about ten masonry tanks and twenty wells, some very handsome and adorned with "chhatris."

Water is more than a hundred feet below the surface, but it is very good, and from thirteen of the wells vegetable gardens are irrigated.

There is one Jain temple in the town and fifteen Vishnu and Shiv, of which the former predominate. The stone used is granite from Raghūnāthgarh in Sikar of Shekhāwātī, which adjoins. The British post office established here receives and despatches about two hundred letters a day. The town and its land are at present held in grant by Jet Singh, Thākūr of Dūndlod in Shekhāwātī, who is a relative of the late Mahārājā Sardār Singh of Bikanīr.

A number of wealthy Seths live here, chiefly Oswālās, of whom there are a hundred and fifty houses. Of Aggarwālās there are about twenty houses. Perhaps thirty of these are rich men. Bīdāsar is not a place of manufacture or much trade. The bazaar contains about a hundred shops, and there are seven or eight temples and almost as many "chhatris." Water is obtained at about a hundred feet; it is fairly good. Inferior sand and lime-stone is obtained in the neighborhood. There is a British post office at Bīdāsar.

A village of about two hundred houses and a few shops: eight or ten of the houses are of masonry. The place was founded in Mahārājā Ratān Singh's time, the land required being taken from the Thākūr of Chārwas in order to establish a Darbār breeding stud, which however was not done. But, a body of horse are maintained here. Good lime-stone, fit for building material as well as mortar, is found near Chápar.

A village ten kos east of Sūjāngarh on the Jaipur border is remarkable for a shrine of Hānūmán, which has considerable repute and attracts pilgrims to its melās on the full moons of Kārtik and Baisākh from distant places. Its trees and arcades are spoken of with admiration by the people of the country.

The Sardār Shahr district west of Reni is said to contain 98 villages, 2,953 houses, 2,474 ploughs. The Sāran Jāts are the principal inhabitants of this region, which is called "Bharūtia" from the quantity of the "bharūt" grass which grows there.

The villages are very small; large cattle are not numerous, but sheep and goats are bred largely.

In the above computation the two "chiras" of Rájáhad and Khejran are comprised, as well as Sardár Shahr proper.

The headquarters of the pargana. It was named after the late Maharájá

Sardár Shahr.

Sardár Singh, who before his accession built a fort here, and called the town which grew up near it

Sardár Shahr. There are said to be men of wealth in the town. It has a few tanks, which are filled in the rainy season, and the water lasts a while.

Bikánir district.

Bikánir district or tehsil comprises what is called the Páñchun pargana, together with villages from other "chiras."

Bikánir city.

The city of Bikánir was founded by Biká in Sambat 1545 (A. D. 1488). [See p. 7 for details.]

Since its foundation it has more than once been plundered by Jodhpúr forces, but I believe by no other. The following

General description

description is a somewhat modified extract from

"Thornton's Gazetteer:"—

"The city is situated in a singularly desolate and slightly elevated spot, the soil being hard, stony, and totally unfit for cultivation. Viewed from some points it presents the appearance of a great and magnificent city, having a fine wall surmounted by many round towers and crowned with the usual Indian battlements. So imposing is its appearance that, when approached in A. D. 1808 by Elphinstone's mission, there were disputes among his followers whether it or Dehli was the more extensive. Some high houses and temples rising above the ramparts and the striking outline of the lofty part add to the impressive appearance of the place.

"The wall is three and a half miles in circuit, built wholly of stone with fine gates and three sally ports. It is six feet thick and from fifteen to thirty feet high, including a parapet six feet high and two feet thick, the breadth of the terreplein varying from two to four feet. The names of the gates are—

"Kot.

"Jáchúsar.

"Nathúsar.

"Síwal.

"Goga.

"Hammalon-ki-bári (the Porter's Gate).

"Uston-ki-bári (the Builder's Gate).

"Kassáion-ki-bári (the Butcher's Gate).

"There is a ditch on three sides only, the ground on the southern face of the city being intersected by deep ravines, which have broken up the whole plain in that quarter. As the soil is 'kankar' or calcareous conglomerate intermingled with siliceous pebbles, the sides of the ditch, though not lined with masonry, are nearly perpendicular; the depth is about fifteen feet, the breadth twenty feet, the interval between the wall and the ditch from twenty to thirty yards; but in some places the excavation has been quite filled up and obliterated."

The interior exhibits an appearance rather flourishing, there being many good houses, faced with red sand-stone, richly carved. Dr. Moore, Superintending Surgeon, observes that the carved buildings are more numerous in Bikánir than in any of the Rájput capitals. The tracery is called "khuda" or "manbat." No houses are worth more than Rs. 50,000 and the

best are situated in narrow dirty lanes where they can scarcely be seen. The poorer kind of houses are besmeared with a sort of reddish clay, abundant in the ravines near the city, which gives the place an appearance of neatness and uniformity, the walls being all red and the doors and windows white. There are distinct wards or sub-divisions allotted exclusively to the respective trades and crafts."

Dr. Moore, already quoted, remarks as follows regarding the interior of the city :—

"To the north and north-east within the walls there are large open spaces, not yet built over, or with only small houses here and there. Penetrating further, the more densely-populated portion of the town is reached, and this, from the extreme irregularity of the streets, lanes, and spaces defies any clear description. Acquainted as I am with all the capitals of Rājputānā and with most of the large provincial cities, I can safely state there is not one vieing with Bikanir as regards the grotesque irregularity of its thoroughfares. After perambulating the city by both highways and bye-ways, the conclusion was formed that the better way of attempting any description is commencing from the centre, or at least from a Jain temple near enough the middle to deserve the title of central. From this temple, or from very near the spot, five larger streets branch off, which, following a tortuous course and often losing themselves in other streets or open spaces, ultimately convey the bold experimentalist towards one or other of the large gateways. The crooked alleys, open spaces, and narrow lanes between these streets can only be described as a confused mass, presenting the irregularity which one might imagine they would assume had some Cyclops cast them from the skies, and then rolled them about at random with the wand of disorder."

The details of its population, houses, temples,
and water-supply are, as represented by the Dar-
bār, as follow :—

		Inside city	Suburbs.			
Men ...	...	10,311	2,155	...	...	12,466
Women ...	...	11,582	2,049	...	...	13,631
Boys ...	...	4,421	1,053	...	...	5,474
Girls ...	...	3,449	748	...	...	4,197
TOTAL						35,768
Houses, of which 1,015 are masonry, &c						
are masonry, &c	...	7,331	1,470	...	...	8,801
Shops ...	...	706	35	...	...	741
Temples (large)	...	13	...	...	...	13
Mosques	...	14	...	...	...	14
Wells	{ sweet, 5 khara, 8 }	13	21	{ 23 sweet 2 brackish. }	{ 4 sweet wells in fort }	41
Tanks	...	4	6	{ a small tank to west of city in Amrasar. }		11

The most numerous classes are the Baniyas chiefly Oswāls and Mahesris, whose united numbers amount to ten thousand, and Brāhmans who exceed seven thousand, the great majority being Pokarna. The only other class which number over one thousand are the Sewaks or servants of the various temples. The rich families are about sixty in number. These have houses of business in from two to nine different centres of trade. Besides these, there are said to be in the city several hundred men of position enough to give bills of exchange (húndís).

The rich men are Mahesris and Oswáls, the former the most numerous. The important sub-clans to which the wealthy belong are—

Mahesris.

Daga.
Damání.
Púgali.
Mintri.
Bágri.
Lada.
Mohota.
Sadhani.
Mundra.
Kotári.
Ráti.

Oswáls.

Dada.
Kotári.
Sethiá.
Sirona.
Sawan Súkha.
Abaní.
Bhantia.
Goleha.

Water supply.

The wells inside the city are—

Supply good water.	{	Brij Lal Biásonka (supplies the best water).
		Raghunáth Sagar.
		Achárjonka.
		Bhagoro Biásonka.
		Geru Lal ditto.
Inferior water.		Phul baiyo.
	{	Bálji baiyo.
		Jagman Dás Biás (not masonry).
		Pinthi Mal Bed.
		Sálgiri.
		Mahta jirá.
		Nawo.
	{	Kesso Rái.
		Binisa (very bad water).

Outside the city the Alak Sagar well, built by the Alakgir sect, is very striking. It is the finest well in the state, and water is constantly being drawn from four sides.

Inside the city the Jaisolai and Gharnanda tanks have fairly good water, the Goga and Farsolái foul water, which, together with the mud at their bottoms, is only used for building purposes. The Jaisolai and Farsolái are masonry, the other two "kacha." Outside are—

Tanks.

Súr Sagar (the finest at Bikanír).
Sahanasulái (hundred-bucketed).
Harsulái.
Mundraka.
Bakht Sagar.
Modhi Ka.

Most of the above designations indicate the names of castes of the builders both of the tanks and wells. The Súr Sagar alone usually retains water for six or seven months; the rest are dry a few weeks after the rains; all are masonry. Dr. Moore's observations on the water and geology of the city of Bikanír are as follow :—

"Water at Bikanír is only obtainable three or four hundred feet from the surface. I investigated the material brought up from a well where water had first been obtained at the depth of 316 feet. This well was within the city walls at the south-west extremity and in the commencement of one of the ravines before described. The strata passed through was—first, a mass of 'kankar;' then, a mass of red clay; thirdly, sandstone; and lastly, white gritty sand or gravel, the latter consisting of white stones

"from the size of a pea to that of an egg, composed of quartz, and although not round, yet with surfaces and angles so smooth as to give rise to the idea that they must at some time have been exposed to the action of running water. Carter, the geologist, has, I believe, expressed the opinion, that the whole of this semi-desert portion of Western India did at sometime form the bed of an ocean, extending from the present shores of the sea to the line of the Arivalli Range, and the geological characteristics shown to exist by the deep wells of Bikanir would seem to support this opinion. On this point I may also observe that I found an unmistakable fossil-shell mark on a stone of the wall of the old fort built by Bikáji, and before alluded to. Although no companion marks were seen in other stones examined, yet a more minute and scientific search than I could afford would probably prove successful.

"As would naturally be supposed after a knowledge of its source, the water of Bikanir, if not plentiful, is most excellent in quality. It is certainly somewhat hard from excess of lime derived from the stratum of 'kankar,' but it is otherwise pure and good, and when drawn from the wells often presents a temperature of 85° Fahrenheit. Neither does it contain organic impurities, or at least only to a small extent, for, contrary to what occurs in almost every other part of India with which I am acquainted, the wells are carefully covered and guarded, perhaps not altogether with the desire of protecting the wells from the entrance of impurities, but for the existing necessity of preventing accidents to those drawing water, for occasionally on the rope (raw hide—here used for strength) breaking, the leathern bucket has rapidly descended, taking with it (owing to some accidental entanglement) the person tending the rope at the mouth. But the stone coverings placed over all the wells effectually protects them from those impurities so often tainting well water, and thus serves two useful purposes. Another cause tending to the purity of the water is the absence of the bhishti's 'massak' at Bikanir. The water is drawn by bullocks, and it is then poured into large 'gharás' or jars, and taken away on camels, or ponies or bullocks, for use. In the cold season it is sold in the city at one pakka pice per 'ghará,' or fifty-six 'gharás' per rupee: in the hot weather it is much more costly. But it escapes the contamination of the never-opened, and therefore never thoroughly cleansed, bhishtis' 'massaks.' The adoption of this Bikanir custom elsewhere in barracks or in private houses might perhaps be conducive to a better water-supply, and to a diminution of those maladies supposed to be at least sometimes disseminated by the use of impure water.

"The Bikanir water is also further maintained pure by the absence of the custom so prevalent in all other places of washing on the brink, or even in the wells from which drinking water is procured. In Bikanir if a person is told he is dirty, he immediately replies that water is scarce; and it may be doubted if the great majority of the inhabitants of Bikanir ever wash at all, although some, from religious motives, may perform the motions of washing with sand. But this absence of washing, as compared with doing so in the wells, is undoubtedly the least of two evils; so the scarcity of water at Bikanir leads, paradoxical as it may appear, to better supply, for no such fouling of the wells as hourly witnessed at other places would there be tolerated."

The peculiar importance of tanks and wells to Bikanir must be my excuse for entering into such minute details, which, I believe, will at a future period be useful for puposes of comparison.

The sanitary condition of the city is very bad. A native report says :—
 Sanitary condition. “People use earthen vessels at night stools, and empty them into the streets from the house-tops

“in the morning regardless of the passers-by.” The condition of the streets after a shower of rain may be conceived, and a certain desire on the part of the travelled Baniyas for some improvement of this state of things is one of the few apparent effects of their knowledge of well-ordered cities, and since Captain Burton, Political Superintendent, was at Bikanir, something has been done towards keeping the streets clean.

The institutions, religious and educational, have been already spoken of, p. 89, 98, and brief notice only is necessary. In 1870 there were twelve “patshálas” or schools for teaching writing and accounts, and lately a large Hindi and Urdu school has been established. There are seven Jain monasteries (upásarás), which possess numerous Sanscrit works. Their names are —

- 1.—Upásard-bara.
- 2.—Acharajji Gachka.
- 3.—Chand do.
- 4.—Kesso do.
- 5.—Lonk do.
- 6.—Gidea Lonk do.
- 7.—Tappe do.

None of the monasteries are striking in appearance.

Nor do any of the temples possess any very striking beauty. The Jain temple, with its lofty dome (sikri), is conspicuous from a distance, and has much elaborate carving. The “Madan Mohan” is handsomely built; the other large ones are heavy, unornamental buildings. The mosques need no notice.

The wheat and rice, of which about 15,000 maunds are usually imported, come chiefly from Bhawalpur: the better pulses, about 2,000 maunds, sugar, 4,000 maunds, and metals, 200 maunds, from Bhiwani in Hissar.

The opium, worth one and a half lakh, comes from Kotah and Malwah; piece-goods to the value of about a lakh from Dehli, Calcutta, and Bombay; kirana (spices and fruits) about a lakh's worth from Kabul via Bhawalpur and the Desert. The exports are about Rs. 25,000 of purified sugar and sweetmeats, a number of blankets, some brass-work and miscellaneous articles.

I again quote Dr. Moore, who says: “Bikanir is famed for the production of a beautifully white variety of sugarcandy, crystallized on a succession of strings introduced into earthen pots. This we were always informed could only be produced at Bikanir in consequence of some peculiarity of the water, report going so far as to assert that the sugar manufacturers were obliged to obtain their water from one particular well; but investigation of the process proved this to be totally incorrect. The best sugar is made with rain-water collected and stored for that purpose, well-water producing an indifferent variety. It is strange that a locality where rain is so scarce should thus be the place where rain-water is used for this purpose. But probably the first sugar made was manufactured rather as a curiosity, perhaps for the Chief, and being approved of, the trade has gradually assumed its present proportions, the tale about the water being fabricated with the desire of keeping the trade at Bikanir.

"Bikánir is also famed for the manufacture of a fine kind of woollen Blankets. "blanket, giving employment to a number of persons. This last doubtless resulted from the district, in consequence of the different varieties of minute sweet grasses growing in the sand, producing very fine long-woolled sheep. The fine red clay or marl found in the neighborhood has also led to the establishment of a large number of potteries from which the distant villages are supplied. There are also many stone-cutters and carvers among the population; and the city containing the families of numerous Seths, not a few are employed as domestic servants."

For further particulars regarding trades, see extract from Captain Burton's Report in Appendix, in which will be found a return showing the trade and custom duties of the city for 1872-73.

Round the city are twelve villages, called the "bárah bás," occupied by Suburbs. malis and low-caste people.

The fort of Bikánir, which contains the Mahárájá's palace, is situated about three hundred yards from the Kot gate of the Fort and palace. city. The palace buildings towering above the battlements give the fort an imposing appearance, as already noted. It is 1,078 yards in circuit, has two entrances each of which has three or four successive gates with different names; and its rampart is strengthened by numerous bastions, about forty feet high, and a moat running all round in a direction parallel to the curtains without following the curve of the bastions. The ditch is thirty feet wide at the top but narrow at the bottom, and twenty or twenty-five feet deep.*

The fort was built in Sambat 1645 by Rájá Rái Singh (*vide* p. 29). It has been ineffectually besieged several times but has never been taken, I believe, though the old fort once was. The palace buildings have been raised bit by bit by successive rájás, nearly every one of whom has contributed something.

The elephants and horses are, as is usual in a Rájput fort, just under the palace windows, and one passes partly through the stables in going to visit the Mahárájá.

The old fort, built by Bika, is picturesquely situated on some high rocky ground, surrounded by ravines, outside the southern wall of the city. It is small, and is now more Old fort than a fort: within it are the cenotaphs of Bika and his successors, Lunkaranji and Jet Singh, together with some of less note. The place is called "Bikáji-ki-Tekri." Inscriptions record the dates of the funerals and the number of "satis" at each. The original stones were for the most part renewed by Mahárájá Ratán Singh, but two of the old ones are remaining.

The cremation tank of Bikánir since the time of Jet Singh, the grandson of Bika, is situated three miles east of the city. On each side of the tank are ranged the cenotaphs of twelve chiefs from Kalián Singh to Ratán Singh. Several of them are fine buildings, and all are graceful pillared domes: the material is the red sandstone of Khári and Makráná marble for the commemorative stones, on which are sculptured in bass-relief the mounted figure of the chief, and on foot, standing in order of precedence before him, the wives, and behind and below him the concubines who mounted his funeral pile. The date, names of the dead, and in

* The family of Máhi Dás the architect and Engineer who built the fort is still resident at Bikánir. They preserve as an heir-loom their ancestor's yard measure.

some cases a line of Sanskrit besides is inscribed. The "satís" up to the time of Gaj Singh average over twelve to each chief, and on Zoráwar Singh's pile the largest number of women, *viz.*, twenty-two, were burnt.

It is remarkable that his immediate successor, Gaj Singh, who died in A. D. 1789, had no "satí," and only two persons were subsequently burned alive. Both of these cremations are remarkable. The one as being the last distinguished "satí" in Bíkánír, and consequently the one whose shrine is the most honored. She was an Udepúr princess, named Díp Kanwar, the wife of Maharájá Súrat Singh's second son Moti Singh, who died in Sambat 1882 (A. D. 1825). People still speak of the courage and devotion her bearing showed as she wended her way with uncovered face to the burning place; and a numerously attended fair in her honor annually takes place in the month of Bhádon (August) at Deví Kúnd. The other was that of a man, named Sangráam Singh, who became "sato" with corpse of Rái Singh in A. D. 1789. When surprise at the fact of a man's taking the place of a wife is expressed, one is informed that sex has nothing to do with the matter—that it is a question of pure love; and an anecdote is told of a camel following its dead master to the burning place, lying down on the pile beside him, and becoming "satí." The female "satís" are far from all being the wives of those with whom they were burnt. Besides Ránís, there are mistresses of the first grade (khawas), those of an inferior one (pátrs), attendants of Ránís (Sahelís), and handmaids (kanízaks) of mistresses.

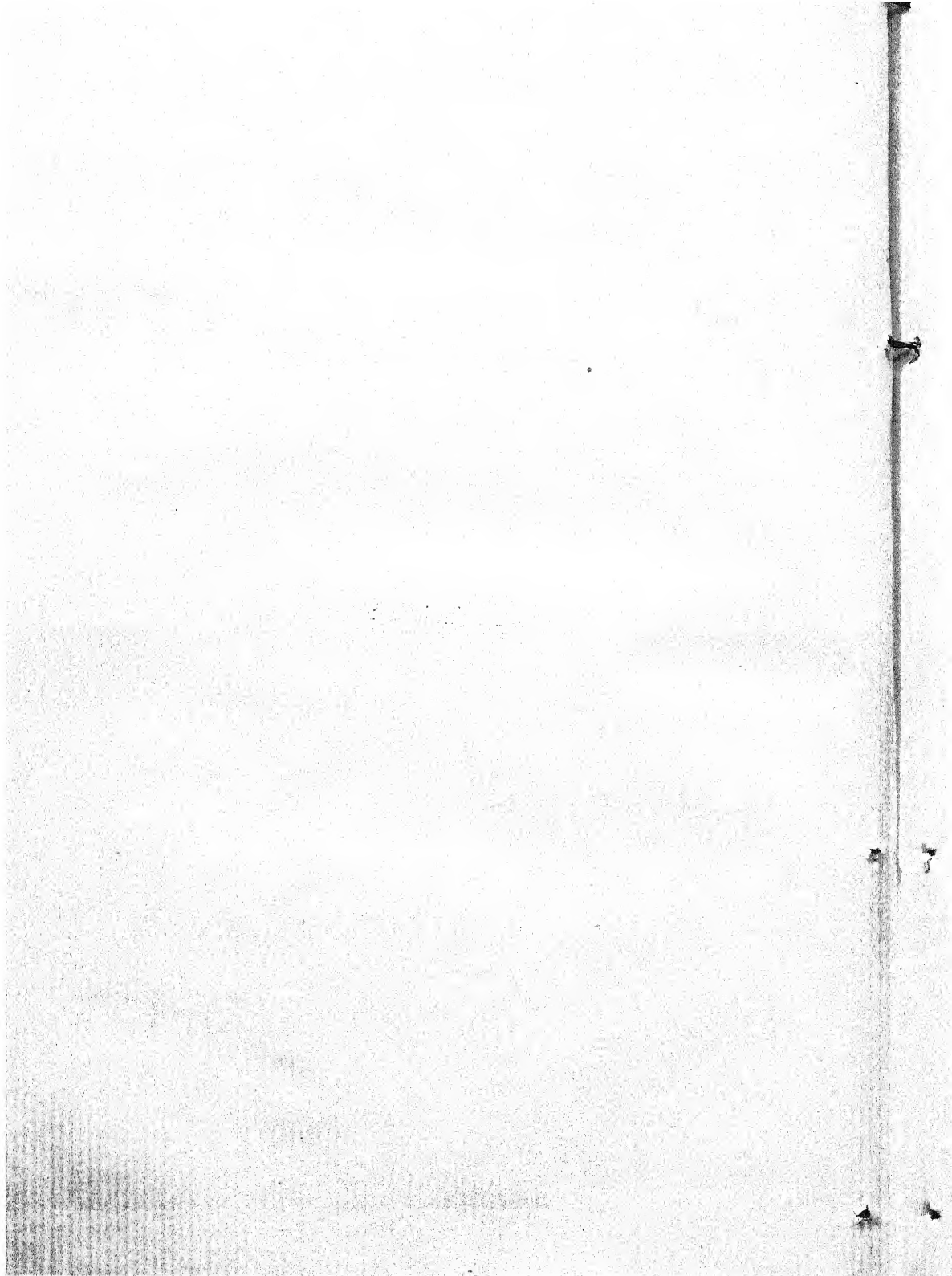
Not far from the tank there is a place for the convenience of the chief and his ladies when they have occasion to attend ceremonies at Deví Kúnd. The whole zanáná sometimes goes in procession to worship at Deví Kúnd, where, too, the tonsure of the chief's sons takes place.

About twenty miles south-west of the city is a favorite place of residence of Bíkánír chiefs. It was founded by Maharájá Gajner. Gaj Singh. Something has been said of the tank or lakelet under "Lakes." The palace or the tank was greatly added to by the late Maharájá Sardár Singh, who spent large sums of money on it. It has little beauty. Its garden is stocked with orange trees and pomegranates and ornamental shrubs and fruits are produced. There are boats on the water wild ducks are numerous in the cold-weather, and wild pigs lie on the banks. A small masonry bungalow, for the convenience of the late Maharájá's European surgeon, is situated beside a little tank. (See remarks at page 82).

Situated about twenty-five miles south-west of the city, is remarkable for its tank and fair, and it is sacred as having been the residence of a teacher, called "Muní Kapal Munjí," and as possessing a temple built by another Muní by name Dhuní Náth. There are numerous gháts shaded by "pípal" trees and piers round and in the tank, the water of which would be clear but for the ablutions of multitudes. The fair takes place in October, when there is most water in the lake.

Kolath.

APPENDICES.



APPENDIX I.

NOTES ON BIKANIR CUSTOMS AND TRADE COMPILED FROM CAPTAIN BURTON'S REPORTS FOR 1872-73.

The "mandi" revenue consists of the following sources of income:—(1) customs and certain other taxes on trade; (2) "khola" or tax on the adoption of a son; (3) "chouth zamin" or tax on the sale of land in towns; (4) "gaimal" or proceeds of unclaimed property. The "mandi" establishments are located at the capital and in tahsil stations. In the tahsils the department is presided over by the tahsildar or hakim. At Bikanir there is a special officer in charge, under the designation of "havildar mandi," who has an establishment of assistants, clerks, peons, weighmen, &c., the cost of which is Rs. 351-15-6 per month at Bikanir and Rs. 712-10-6 for the tahsils. There are forty "chaukis" (or custom posts) attached to the city "mandi."

The principal items under the head of "Customs" are the import, export, and transit duties. The principal commercial lines now followed are—

From Delhi *via* Bhiwani in Hissar (the great Eastern mart for Rajputana) to Rajgarh in Bikanir, whence two lines proceed, one to Bikanir City *via* Reni, the other *via* Churur,

Transit, trade, and imports. Ratangarh, and Sanganarh to Phalodi, Nagar, Jodhpur, and Pali in Marwar. This last is the most important through route in Bikanir. By it are conveyed from British territory sugar in various shapes, English piece-goods, Benares silks, brocades, cloths, Delhi turbans, gold and silver lace groceries, grain (particularly rice from Delhi), glass-ware, metals, precious and other, gold and silver thread, shoes, preserves, pickles, and sherbets.

From Bhawalpur *via* Mojarh and Pugal (whence a line branches off to Jaisalmir) come Kabul fruits, furs, horses, carpets, woollen cloths, drugs, grain, and groceries to the city of Bikanir, whence some go on to Phalodi and other places in Marwar.

With Jaipur there is a considerable import trade in Sanganir cloth, Sanganir paper, Singhana carts, cotton, iron cooking-utensils, precious metals, precious stones, fruits, vegetables, &c.

From Kotah and the country south of Ajmir come *via* Marwar, opium, "al" (dye), "churias" (a kind of long scarf), Mewar molasses, Benares raw sugar, tobacco, Buhampur and Hyderabad cotton and silk fabrics (some worked in gold and silver, such as "churias," "mandils," "selas"), "dopattas," "women's saris" (or scarves), Gujarat brocades, "rol" (a red powder for tikas), ivory, dates, cocoanuts, iron goods, Ujjain snuff, rose perfumes, betel, leaves, &c.

From Marwar, Jodhpur turbans, Mertia "khas pankhas," and ivory pankha handles, Makrana marble and marble articles, Nagar ivory-work and metal vessels.

Imported grain comes chiefly from Sirsa and Fazilka on the Satlej and from Sirsa also comes much ghi.

Salt and cattle from Marwar; "Multani mitti" from Meth in Bikanir; sugarcandy

Transit, trade, and exports. wool, woollen fabrics, "sajji" from the desert to the north; ivory bracelets gilded in Bikanir, raw hides, and "chhagals" or small leather water-bags made at Reni; and occasionally ghi and after a good harvest bajra and moth to Marwar are the chief exports. Much of the "Multani mitti" goes to Sirsa, with which place and Fazilka on the Satlej a good deal of business is done, chiefly in wool, which is of superior quality.

Between Sāmbhar, Phalodi, Didwānā, &c., in Mārwar and the city of Bikanir, a peculiar class of fakirs, called the "Diwānā fakirs," a Sikh sect

Traders. from the Punjāb distinguished by their head-dress of peacock feathers, are the principal traders. They also trade by the Bhiwāni and Mārwar line, on which, however, Aggarwālas are said to do most business. Mullariā Brāhmanas, so called from their village Mullar near Phalodi in Mārwar, are mostly found on the Phalodi, Bhāwalpūr, and Sirsā routes. Chāraus, too, are great traders. They and the Diwānā fakirs are allowed a remission of one-fourth the usual custom dues.

Traders prefer the Bikanir route between Bhiwāni and Mārwar to the Shekhāwāti one, because in Shekhāwāti custom-dues are exacted by many

The Shekhāwāti route. thākurs, whereas by Bikanir the dues are settled once for all at Rājgarh or Sūjāgarh. A complete return of customs-dues and trade not being available, the following return of the city "mandi" or market for 1872-73 (Sambat 1929) is alone given.

Return showing the Imports and Exports of the Bikaner City Mandi for the Sambas year 1929 (A. D. 1872-73).

No.	NAMES OF ARTICLES.	QUANTITY.		Value.	RATES.		Amount collected.	Grand Total.	REMARKS.
		Camel-loads.	Maunds.		Per	Rate.			
				Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.		
IMPORTS									
1	Bajri, moth, gawar, &c.	17,189	...	255,000 0 0	Camel	1 3 0	20,411 15 0		
2	Wheat, barley, grain, &c.	5,345	...	106,900 0 0	"	2 4 0	12,026 4 0		
3	Mung (pulse), urad	1,355	...	20,325 0 0	"	1 7 0	1,947 13 0		
4	Rice (best sort), karnad	462	...	23,100 0 0	"	4 3 0	1,934 10 0		
5	Tri (oil seeds)	1,191	...	47,640 0 0	"	2 4 0	2,679 4 0		
6	Kali, chitna, (lime)	75	...	1,500 0 0	"	0 15 0	70 5 0		
7	Piaz (onions)	187	...	1,870 0 0	"	0 9 0	95 3 0		
8	Saji (Soda)	200	...	2,000 0 0	"	0 3 0	37 8 0		
9	Ghi (clarified butter)	...	16,608	332,160 0 0	Maund.	0 12 6	12,975 0 0		
10	Khand (sugar)	...	18,692	205,612 0 0	"	0 6 9	7,885 11 0		
11	Gir (molasses)	...	11,278	45,112 0 0	"	0 3 6	2,467 1 0		
12	Shakar (coarse sugar)	...	2,062	10,310 0 0	"	0 4 0	515 8 0		
13	Opium	...	509-14	127,350 0 0	"	6 0 0	3,056 2 0		
14	Bhang (<i>Canabis sativa</i>)	...	186	1,488 0 0	"	0 5 0	58 2 0		
15	Tobacco used in smoking	...	653	6,530 0 0	"	0 10 0	408 2 0		
16	Ditto	...	98	3,920 0 0	"	1 1 9	180 11 6		
17	Zard	...	139	2,780 0 0	"	0 13 0	112 15 0		
18	Cloth (foreign)	...	2,364	118,200 0 0	"	1 12 0	4,137 0 0		
19	Country and coarse cloth	...	1,879	46,975 0 0	"	0 10 0	1,174 6 0		
20	Gold and silver thread, silk cloths, shawls, &c.	...	19,600	...	100 Rs.	5 0 0	980 0 0		This is probably incorrect; the rate is unknown.
21	Cotton	...	...	7,500 0 0	"	3 2 0	234 6 0		
22	Salt	...	6,042	2,014 0 0	"	0 0 0	231 15 0		
23	Mangoes	...	486	4,860 0 0	Maund.	0 8 0	243 0 0		From Sindh.
24	Pomegranates	...	165	660 0 0	"	0 4 0	41 4 0		
25	Lemons, sweet-potatoes, sugarcane, &c.	...	657	1,971 0 0	"	0 2 0	82 4 0		
26	Apples, grapes, &c.	20	...	304 0 0	Camel.	0 4 0	80 0 0		
27	Almonds, dry grapes, &c.	...	700	7,000 0 0	Maund.	1 2 0	787 8 0		
28	Copper	...	175	6,125 0 0	"	1 4 0	218 12 0		
29	Pewter	...	102	2,040 0 0	"	0 9 0	57 6 0		
30	Lead	...	25-8	335 0 0	"	0 7 0	11 2 6		
31	Pewter, bell metal, brass, &c.	...	...	1,500 0 0	100 Rs.	3 2 0	46 14 0		
32	Kasumb	...	654	13,080 0 0	Maund.	0 12 0	490 8 0		
33	Al	...	490	3,920 0 0	"	0 8 0	245 0 0		

Return showing the Imports and Exports of the Bikanir City Mandis for the Sambat year 1929 (A. D. 1872-73,) - conold.

NO.	NAMES OF ARTICLES.	QUANTITY.		Value.	RATES.		Amount collected.	Grand Total.	REMARKS.
		Camel-loads.	Maunds.		Per	Ratio.			
				Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	
34	Indigo	...	37	11,010 0 0	Maund.	3 0 0	111 0 0	0 0 0	
35	Charas	...	30-20	3,050 0 0	"	2 8 0	76 4 0	0 0 0	
36	Iron	...	693	4,158 0 0	"	0 4 0	173 4 0	0 0 0	
37	Oil	...	1,003	10,030 0 0	"	0 8 0	501 8 0	0 0 0	
38	Red pepper, turmeric, coriander, amchut, singhara, naspal	...	3,177	22,239 0 0	"	0 6 0	1,191 6 0	0 0 0	
39	Majit (dyes)	...	152	1,520 0 0	"	0 13 6	128 4 0	0 0 0	
40	Keri pak, a kind of pickle, rose-water, and sherbet	...	...	2,000 0 0	"	2 0 0	200 0 0	0 0 0	
41	Lahsun (garlic)	...	232	696 0 0	"	0 5 0	72 8 0	0 0 0	
42		...	180	7,200 0 0	"	1 2 6	208 2 3	0 0 0	
43	Atr (of roses and other flowers)	...	...	536 0 0	100 Rs.	5 0 0	26 12 8	0 0 0	
44	Gold	50 lbs. in weight.	361	900 0 0	Maund.	5 0 0	45 0 0	0 0 0	
45	Albokharas (plums)	...	123	932 0 0	"	3 0 0	112 13 0	0 0 0	
46	Ivory	...	...	90,750 0 0	100 Rs.	5 0 0	369 0 0	0 0 0	
47	Saffron	...	...	865 0 0	Maund.	0 11 3	65 6 3	0 0 0	
48	Anardana (or seeds of pomegranates)	...	93	744 0 0	"	0 4 0	123 12 0	0 0 0	
49	Moong ()	...	495	537 0 0	"	0 6 6	40 10 0	0 0 0	
50	Hemp string	...	100	800 0 0	"	0 4 0	16 14 0	0 0 0	
51	Soap	...	67-20	637 0 0	"	0 4 0	103 2 0	0 0 0	
52	Sakir (dyes)	...	200	1,200 0 0	"	0 9 0	81 9 0	0 0 0	
53	Phitkari (alum)	...	145	870 0 0	"	0 9 0	191 3 0	0 0 0	
54	Cocanuts	...	...	2,067 0 0	100 Rs.	9 4 0	167 5 0	0 0 0	
55	Glassware, lac, &c.	...	...	2,525 0 0	"	4 4 0	177 8 0	0 0 0	
56	Kos, bhaisa, khala, (raw hides, buffalo hides, and leather)...	...	2,340	11,760 0 0	Maund.	0 0 0	2,809 8 0	0 0 0	
57	Miscellaneous - other articles	...	2,809-20	14,475 0 0	"	1 0 0	...	...
EXPORTS									
1	Wool, blankets, &c.	...	900	27,000 0 0	Maund.	0 6 0	337 8 0	0 0 0	
2	Sugarcandy	...	200	2,300 0 0	"	0 6 0	75 0 0	0 0 0	
3	Opium	...	100	25,000 0 0	"	0 14 0	87 8 0	0 0 0	
4	Utensils, cloth, &c.	...	...	2,000 0 0	100 Rs.	3 2 0	62 8 0	0 0 0	
5	Ivory	...	10	2,500 0 0	Maund.	0 14 0	8 12 0	0 0 0	
		100	...	1,000 0 0	Camel.	0 12 9	79 10 3	650 14 3	

APPENDIX II.

NOTES ON PECULIAR TAXES BASED ON CAPTAIN BURTON'S REPORTS.

1st.—"Rúpota," a tax levied on shops and on the sale of camels and certain goods in the city.

2nd.—"Atim-ká-saudá," or license tax on speculations in the prices of opium: it is levied on each speculator, and varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 6.

3rd.—"Menh-ká-saudá," a license tax on speculation on the probability of rainfall. The last two-named "saudás" are farmed to contractors, who collect fees from those who engage in such speculations. They are both objectionable sources of income, being derived from gambling profits, and an attempt to abolish them has been made.

4th.—"Tankri ghi," raw sugar, &c., "zardá tamákú" (chewing tobacco) are taxes on the weighing of these articles. They are also farmed to contractors.

5th.—"Kaprá-ki-dalláki," levied on cloth merchants in the shape of brokerage.

6th.—"Soná-rúpá-ki-chaddmi," tax on the sale of gold and silver.

7th.—"Kandoi-ká-laga," license tax on the making of sweetmeats for festivals.

8th.—"Kiraui-lágon-ki-bách," license tax on craftsmen, such as goldsmiths, iron-mongers, tailors, shoe-makers, &c. It is a lump sum yearly fixed and levied. The chaudhris of each trade or section assesses the sum to be paid by individuals and collects the amount. No register showing the names or numbers of persons taxed is kept. The proceeds of the taxes levied on certain trades are permanently placed at the disposal of the Public Works Department, whose own officers impose and collect them.

9th.—"Khola," or adoption fee, is paid by the person adopting a son, and is generally regulated according to his means, but supposed to be limited to Rs. 1,000. This amount was much exceeded during the late Maharájá's reign, especially within the last few years of his life, when mutasaddis, hazúris, and golá officials were allowed to exercise uncontrolled authority in raising money to meet the increasing expenditure of the state. They exacted as much as possible, and in one case obtained (in Sambat 1925) Rs. 25,000 from a well-known Seth. Persons were compelled (by the golás or slaves in favor) to adopt persons against their will, and in some cases were prevented from adopting at all with a view to their property escheating to the Darbár on their death.

10th.—"Chauth zamín" is distinguished under two heads, viz., the sale (within the city) of land and buildings belonging to the Darbár, and the sale of land and buildings, the property of private individuals. In the first case, the whole of the proceeds are credited to the Darbár; in the second, only one-fourth is taken by the ráj. The golás (or slaves employed by the Maharájá without regular appointment to offices) were accustomed to exercise great tyranny and oppression in these matters, indeed; property was disposed of, and private sales were interfered with, in a most arbitrary manner. Persons were compelled to purchase (as ráj property) land and houses they had occupied as their own for years, and legitimate purchases were set aside and others brought forward to suit the convenience of the ráj officials. When landed property is sold within the city, it is necessary for the parties concerned to have the sale confirmed by a paper bearing the state seal. When this paper was brought to the "mandi" or customs officer to receive the seal, the golás generally detained it till one or more persons were found to compete with the original purchaser, who on many occasions not only lost his bargain, but the money he had paid for the property, for the golás seldom thought it necessary to reimburse him from the amount they received from the new purchaser.

11th.—"Gaimál," or proceeds of unclaimed property.—The property in Bikanér territory of all Bikanér subjects living in the country or in foreign parts is claimed by the ráj (and called "gaimál") when such persons die without leaving a male heir. This, too, was a source of much oppression.

12th.—“Dhūan,” house-tax for each family.

13th.—“Kurar jhunkera,” tax for fodder for each family.

14th.—“Neota bāch,” tax on presents on occasions of marriage, at Rs. 7 and 7 takās (or 14 pice).

15th.—“Talibāb,” cess levied from non-agriculturist classes, at Rs. 2 on each family and Rs. 4 per camel.

16th.—“Singhoti,” tax on sheep and goats, at the rate of Re. 1 for every 14 heads.

17th.—“Chaudrbāb,” at Rs. 11 from each village chaudhri.

18th.—“Kot and Khāi bāch,” tax occasionally levied for the repairs of the Bikanir fort.

19th.—“Peshkash,” succession fee on pattās, which is generally equal to the yearly “rakm” payable by the pattās, but sometimes very much more. Thus, a lakh of rupees with one lakh of takās (or 2,00,000 pice) is entered in the office records as the amount of “peshkash” leviable from Mahajan estate, but only half seems to have been sometimes levied.

20th.—“Nazranā,” levied on occasion of change of pattās, and often arbitrarily when the chief wants money.

21st.—“Rāj tilak,” a present made to the chief on occasion of accession to the “gadī.” It consists of horses, elephants, gold-mohurs, &c.

22nd.—“Salsolari,” tax levied from Dheds (a very low caste), at 2 or 2½ per cent. per family.

Several other taxes or cesses of peculiar nature might be mentioned.

APPENDIX III.

TREATIES.

ARTICLE I.

There shall be perpetual friendship, alliance, and unity of interests between the Hon'ble Company and Mahārājā Sūrat Singh and his heirs and successors, and the friends and enemies of one party shall be the friends and enemies of both parties.

ARTICLE II.

The British Government engages to protect the principality and territory of Bikanīr.

ARTICLE III.

Mahārājā Sūrat Singh and his heirs and successors will act in subordinate co-operation with the British Government and acknowledge its supremacy, and will not have any connection with any other chiefs or states.

ARTICLE IV.

The Mahārājā and his heirs and successors will not enter into negotiation with any chief or state without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government, but the usual amicable correspondence with friends and relations shall continue.

ARTICLE V.

The Mahārājā and his heirs and successors will not commit aggressions on any one; if by accident any dispute arise with any one, the settlement of it shall be submitted to the arbitration and award of the British Government.

ARTICLE VI.

Whereas certain persons of the principality of Bikanīr have adopted the evil courses of highway robbers and banditti, and have plundered the property of many to the great molestation of the peaceable subjects of both of the contracting parties, the Mahārājā engages to cause to be restored the property plundered from inhabitants of the British territories up to this time, and for the future entirely to suppress the robbers and plunderers in his principality. If the Mahārājā be not able to effect their suppression, assistance shall be afforded on his application by the British Government, in which case the Mahārājā will pay all the expenses of force employed; or in the event of his not finding means to pay those expenses, he will in lieu cede parts of his territory to the British Government, which after the payment of those expenses shall be restored.

ARTICLE VII.

The British Government on the application of the Mahārājā will reduce to subjection thākurs and other inhabitants of his principality who have revolted and thrown off his authority. In this case the Mahārājā will pay all the expenses of the force employed, or in the event of not having the means will instead cede parts of his territory to the British Government, which shall be restored after the payment of those expenses.

ARTICLE VIII.

The Mahārājā of Bikanīr will furnish troops, at the requisition of the British Government, according to his means.

ARTICLE IX.

The Mahārājā and his heirs and successors shall be absolute rulers of their country and the British jurisdiction shall not be introduced into that principality.

ARTICLE X.

It is the wish and intention of the British Government that the roads of Bikānīr and Bhatner be rendered passable and safe for the transit of trade to and from the countries of Kabūl and Khorāsān, &c. The Mahārājā engages effectually to accomplish that object within his own dominions, so that merchants shall pass with protection and safety and meet with no impediment; and with respect to custom duties, the established rates shall not be exceeded.

ARTICLE XI.

This treaty of eleven articles having been concluded and signed and sealed by Mr. Charles Theophilus Metcalfe and Oujha Kashee Nath, the ratifications by His Excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General and Rāj Rajheesur Mahārājā Sroomun Sree Sūrat Sing, Bahadoor, shall be exchanged within twenty days from the present date.

Done at Dehli, this 9th day of March A. D. 1818.

(Signed) C. T. METCALFE. L. S.

(„) OUJHA KASHEE NATH. L. S.

Small seal of the Governor-General.

(„) HASTINGS.

This treaty was ratified by His Excellency the Governor-General in Camp near Patrassa Ghāt on the Gogra on the 21st March 1818.

(Signed) J. ADAM,

Secretary to the Governor General.

EXTRADITION TREATY.

ARTICLE I.

That any person, whether a British or Foreign subject, committing a heinous offence in British territory, and seeking shelter within the limits of the Bikānīr State, shall be apprehended and delivered up by the latter Government to the former on requisition in the usual manner.

ARTICLE II.

That any person, being a subject of Bikānīr, committing a heinous offence within the limits of the Bikānīr State, and seeking asylum in British territory, will be apprehended and delivered up by the latter Government to the former on requisition in the usual manner.

ARTICLE III.

That any person other than a Bikānīr subject, committing a heinous offence within the limits of the Bikānīr State, and seeking asylum in British territory, will be apprehended, and the case investigated by such court as the British Government may direct. As a general rule, such cases will be tried by the court of the political officer in whom the political supervision of the Bikānīr state may at the time be vested.

ARTICLE IV.

That in no case shall either Government be bound to surrender any person accused of a heinous offence except on requisition duly made by or by the authority of, the Government within whose territories the offence shall be charged to have been committed, and also upon such evidence of criminality as, according to the laws of the country in which the person accused shall be found, would justify his apprehension and sustain the charge if the offence had been there committed.

ARTICLE V.

That the following offences be deemed as coming within the category of heinous offences :—

- 1st. — Murder.
- 2nd. — Attempt to murder.
- 3rd. — Culpable homicide under aggravating circumstances.
- 4th. — Thuggee.
- 5th. — Poisoning.
- 6th. — Rape.
- 7th. — Causing grievous hurt.
- 8th. — Child-stealing.
- 9th. — Selling females.
- 10th. — Dacoity.
- 11th. — Robbery.
- 12th. — Burglary.
- 13th. — Cattle-theft.
- 14th. — Arson.
- 15th. — Forgery.
- 16th. — Counterfeiting coin or altering base coin.
- 17th. — Criminal breach of trust.
- 18th. — Criminal misappropriation of property.
- 19th. — Abetting the above offences.

ARTICLE VI.

The expense of any apprehension, detention, or surrender, made in virtue of the foregoing stipulations, shall be borne and defrayed by the Government making the requisition.

ARTICLE VII.

The above treaty shall continue in force until either of the high contracting parties shall give notice to the other of its wish to terminate it.

ARTICLE VIII.

Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to affect any treaty now existing between the high contracting parties, except so far as any treaty may be repugnant thereto.

Done at Bikanir this third day of February in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine.

P. W. POWLETT,

Asst. Agent, Governor General.

*Signature and seal of the Mahārājā
of Bikanir.*

Seal.

R. H. KEATINGE,

Governor General's Agent.

Seal.

MAYO.

This treaty was ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India at Simla on the 15th of June 1869.

Seal.

W. SETON-KARR,

Secy., Govt. of India. Foreign Dept.

APPENDIX IV.

Mr. Blochmann's translation of the *Ain Akbari* and the fifth volume of Elliot's *Musalmán Historians* came to me too late to be used much in the body of the *Gazetteer*. The following is an extract from Mr. Blochmann's work :—

"Rái Singh belonged to the Ráthors of Bíkánír, and is the fourth descendant from Rái Máldeo.* His father, Kalian Mál, was a friend of Bairam (p. 316, Tr.), and paid in the fifteenth year his respects to Akbar at Ajmír, when he, together with his son, entered the emperor's service. He also sent his brother's daughter to Akbar's haram. Kalian Mál was in the fortieth year a commander of two thousand men.

"Rái Singh in the seventeenth year, when Akbar made preparations to crush the rebellion in Gujarat, occupied Jodhpúr, the old seat of Máldeo, in order to prevent the rebels from invading the Dehli territory; but Ibráhím, after his defeat at Sarnál, invaded Akbar's territory and besieged Nágór, which at that time was the "*tuyúl*" of Khán-i-Kalám, and was defended by his son, Farrukh Khán (p. 322, Tr.). Rái Singh came to his relief, and the Mirza had not only to raise the siege but was pursued and defeated by Rái Singh. In the following year also Rái Singh distinguished himself in the engagement with Muhammad Husen Mirzá (p. 325, Tr.).

"In the nineteenth year Rái Singh and Sháh Qulí Mahram were ordered to punish Chandr Sen, son of Rájá Máldeo; but as they were unable to take Siwánah, Chandr Sen's strong-hold, notwithstanding the auxiliaries which Akbar had sent them at Rái Singh's request, Rái Singh in the twenty-first year was called to court, and Sháháb Khán took the command. Before the end of the same year, however, Rái Singh and Tarson Muhammad Khán were sent against the refractory zamindárs of Jálór and Sarohí; but as they applied to Akbar for pardon, Rái Singh and Sayyid Háshim of Bárah garrisoned Nádat to watch the Ráná of Udepur, and bring the rebels of those districts to obedience. As at this time Sultán Deodah, the zamindár of Sarohí, from distrust again assumed a hostile attitude, Rái Singh marched against Sarohí and besieged it. During the siege Rái Singh called his family to his camp; but Sultán Deodah fell upon the caravan, killed several relations of Rái Singh, and then withdrew to Abúgarh, which Sultán surrendered. Rái Singh left a garrison there, and took Sultán to court.

"In the twentieth year, when Mirza Muhammad Hákim, Akbar's brother, threatened to invade the Panjáb, Rái Singh with several other grandees was sent in advance. They were soon followed by Prince Murád. When the imperial army, in the end of the same year, returned to Agráh, Rái Singh and several others were sent as "*tuyúldárs*" to the Panjáb. In the twenty-eighth year he served in Bengal.

"In the thirtieth year Rái Singh and Ismaíl Qulí Khán led successfully an expedition against the Bálúchis. In the following year (19th Rajab, 994) Rái Singh's daughter was married to Prince Salím. In the thirtyfifth year, he went for some time to Bíkánír, and served, in the end of the thirty-sixth year, in Sindh under M. Abdurrahím.

"In the thirty-eighth year Akbar paid Rái Singh a visit of condolence. The son of Rájá Rámchand Baghelah of Bándhú died suddenly on his way to Bándhú, to which he had only lately, after the death of his father, been appointed.

"The young Rájá had married a daughter of Rái Singh. Akbar interceded for their young children, and prevented Rái Singh's daughter from burning herself. Soon after, Rái Singh stayed away from court for some reason, during which time one of his servants complained of him to Akbar. The emperor called the man to court; but Rái Singh concealed him, and gave out he had run away. Akbar was annoyed, and excluded Rái Singh for some time from the Darbárs; but after some time he restored him and sent him as governor to Súrat, with the order to assist in the Dakhín wars.

"Rái Singh, however, delayed in Bíkánír, and, when he had at last left, delayed on the road to Súrat. Akbar advised him to be obedient, but seeing that he would not go called him to court, but without allowing him to attend the Darbárs. After some time he was pardoned.

* Bika must be meant.

"In the forty-fifth year Rái Singh was ordered to accompany Abulfazi to Násik, but as "his son Dalpat had caused disturbances in Bíkánir (*vide* p. 359, Tr.) Rái Singh got "leave to go home. In the following year he went again to court. In the forty-eighth "year he served under Prince Salím against the Ráná of Udepúr.

"At the death of the Emperor, Rái Singh was a commander of four-thousand. Jahángir, "on his accession, made him a commander of five-thousand. When the Emperor set out "for the Panjáb to pursue Khasran, Rái Singh was put in charge of the travelling harem, "but on the road he left without order and went to Bíkánir. In the second year, when "Jahángir returned from Kábul, Rái Singh, at the advice of Sharif Khán, presented him- "self before the Emperor with a *faulad* round his neck to show his willingness to suffer "punishment for his crimes, and was again pardoned. He died in 1021.

"His sons.—(1) Dalpat.—He was a commander of five-thousand. In the thirty-sixth "year he served in the Sindh war, but was looked upon as a coward. In the forty-fifth "year, when Akbar was in the Dakhan, Muzaffar Husain Mirza, in consequence of his "differences with Khwájá Fathullah, had fled; and Dalpat, under the pretext of following "him up, had gone to Bíkánir and created disturbances. In the forty-sixth year his father "brought him to his senses. Dalpat asked to be pardoned, and was ordered again to come "to court.

"In the third year of Jahángir's reign (1017), he appears to have offended the Emperor, "but at the request of Khán Jahán Lodí was pardoned. After the death of his father "Dalpat came from the Dakhan to court, was appointed successor, and got the title of "Rái, although his younger brother (by another mother), Súr Singh, claimed the right "of succession, which Rái Singh had promised him from affection to his mother. Súr "Singh, however, disgusted Jahángir by the bold way in which he preferred his claim.

"Dalpat was then ordered to join M. Rustam-i-Safawi, the Governor of Sindh. In the "eighth year it was reported to Jahángir that Súr Singh had attacked and defeated his "brother, who in consequence had created disturbances in Hisár. Háshim, the Foujdár "of that Sirkár, caught him and sent him fettered to court, where he was executed as a warn- "ing to others.

"For Dalpat's son, Mahes Dás, and grandson, Ratan (*vide* PADISHAHNÁMAH, pp. 635. "723, 684, 729).

"After the death of his brother, Súr Singh, he rose to favor. In histories he is gene- "rally called Ráo Súr Singh, a title which he received from Sháhjahán. He died in 1040. "He had two sons, Karan and Sater Sál, the former of whom inherited the title of Ráo "(*vide* Padisháhnámah II, page 727) "

The Akbarnámah mentions that the Emperor Humáyún, when contending with Sher Shah, passed through Bíkánir in 949 H., A. D. 1542 (p. 211, Note, Vol. V, Mus. His.). When Akbar's famous minister, Bairám Khán, was after his fall prevented by Maldeo of Jodhpúr from marching on Gujarát, he proceeded from Nágor to Bikanir, where the zamíndár of that country, Rái Kalian Mal, and his son, Rái Singh, received him with great kindness, and kept him some days at Bíkánir, treating him most hospitably (Tabakát, p. 265, Vol. V, Mus. His.).

The Tabakát mentions that in 978 H. (A. D. 1570) Akbar went to Nágor, where he received both Chandr Sen of Márwár and Kalian Mal of Bíkánir. The latter, who was accompanied by his son Rái Singh, came to present his tribute. As Kalian Mal was too fat to sit on horseback, he was allowed to go home, but Rái Singh was kept in attendance on His Majesty (p. 385, Vol. V, Mus. His.).

In the second Gujarát war Rái Singh and Bhagwán Dás of Amer were sent with the advance detachment (p. 361, Vol. V, Mus. His.).

During an engagement it being feared that the prisoners would escape, Rái Singh or his people put to death Muhammad Husain Mirza (mentioned above) who was in his custody (p. 368, Vol. V, Mus. His.).

Dalpat is mentioned in the Tabakát as one of the leaders of a detachment which marched eighty kos in two days (p. 463, Vol. V, Mus. His.).

Abulfazi says in the Akbarnámah (events of the twenty-first year) that the old name "of Abugarh was *Arbuda Achal*—*Arbuda* being the name of a spirit who, disguised as a "female, shows wanderers the way, and *Achal* meaning mountain" (Blochmann's TRANSLATION OF AIN-AKBARI, p. 358, Note). This accounts for the use of the word *Achalgarh* in connection with Rái Singh's Sirohi campaign at page 27 of the KIYANT.

On the whole, these authentic histories seem to indicate the general correctness of the main statements in the KIYANT, though the omissions therein are serious. Thus, no mention is made of the fact of Humáyún having been at Bíkánir, nor of the great Bairám Khán's

entertainment there, nor of the Sindh war in which Rái Singh figured; but if Dalpat Singh was disgraced in that war, the non-mention of the expedition by the KIYANT would be accounted for. That Rái Singh was made a Rájá by Akbar seems doubtful, for not only is he styled Rái Rái Singh, but his son and grandson were, it appears, respectively termed "Rái" and "Ráo."

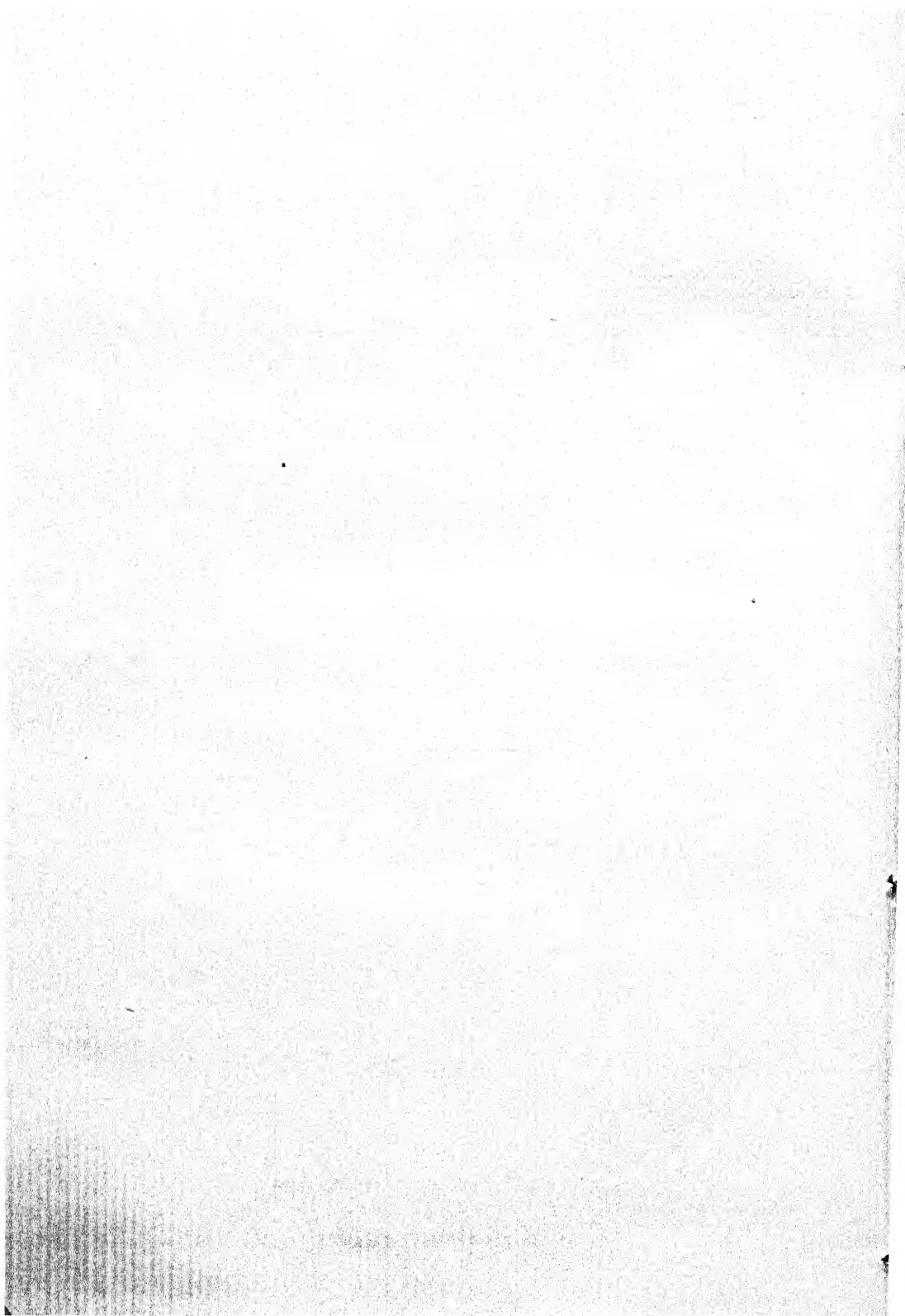
However, in the Mansabdár list of the Tabakát, though not in the Aín-Akbarí, Rái Singh is styled Rájá Rái Singh of Bíkánír and Nágor, and on that list, the peerage of the empire, he ranked far above several Rájás (p. 530, Blochmann's Translation).

No Hindus except the three—Amer Kachwáhas, Bihári Mal, Bhagwán Das, and Mán Singh—father, son, and grandson, were above him, and while his mansab varied from four-thousand to five-thousand, the Hindú next below him was a Mansabdár of but three-thousand.

As Professors Blochmann and Dawson progress with their labors, it will be easy further to check the Bíkánír poems.



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